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Sablan reconsiders, is re-nominated to CEC board. PAGE 2

HANMI occupancy at 41% in June 2022. PAGE 6

$1

Medical Referral in transition toward sustainability—Muña

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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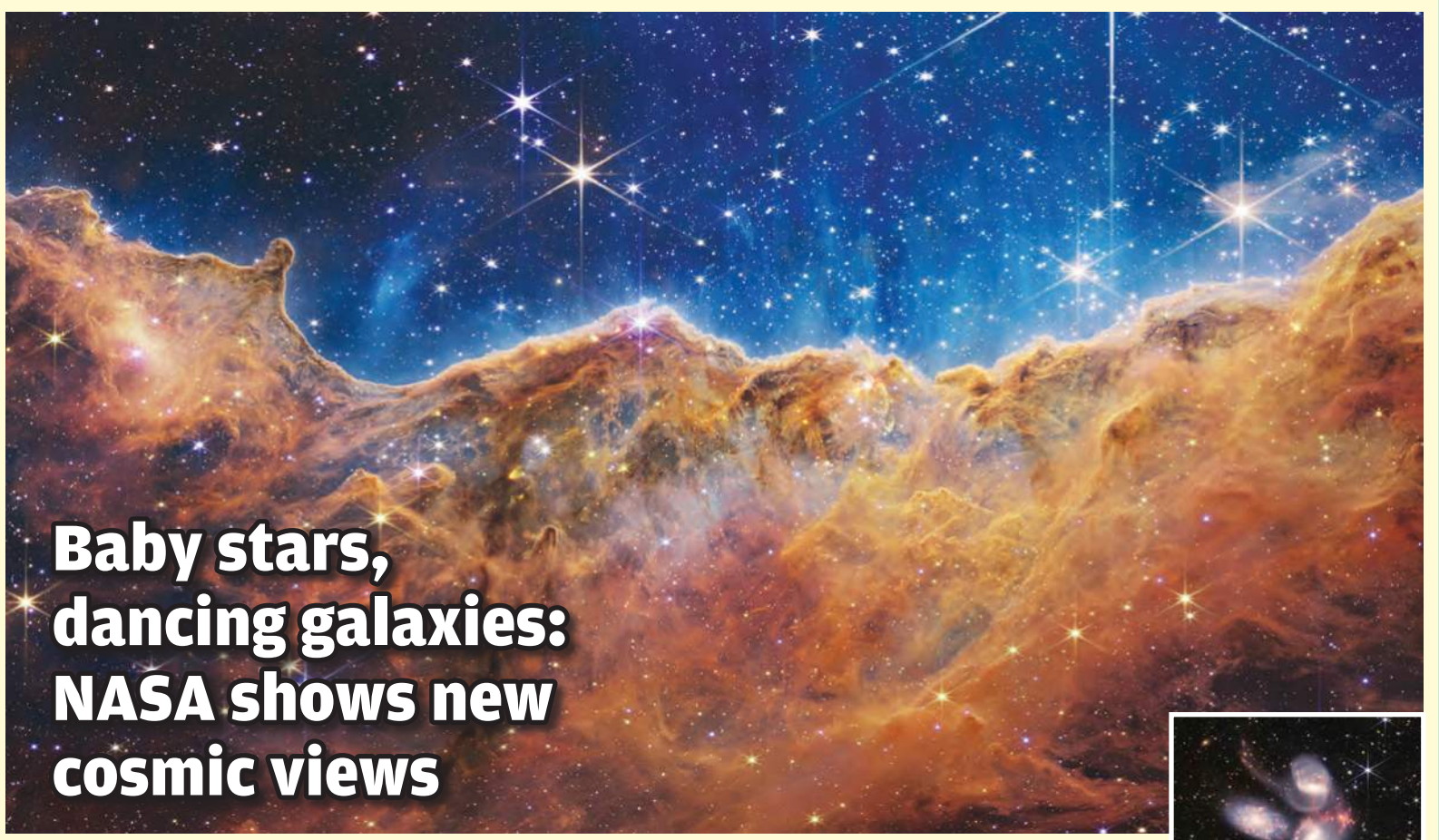
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., which is now in charge of the CNMI's Medical Referral program, is putting in place many changes toward making the program sustainable by ensuring that all other benefits that are available to people are exhausted before they avail of the program.

Muna

That essentially means availing of a locally available form of treatment

See MEDICAL on Page 4



Baby stars, dancing galaxies: NASA shows new cosmic views

This image released by NASA on Tuesday, July 12, 2022, shows the edge of a nearby, young, star-forming region NGC 3324 in the Carina Nebula. Captured in infrared light by the Near-Infrared Camera (NIRCam) on the James Webb Space Telescope, this image reveals previously obscured areas of star birth, according to NASA. NASA, ESA, CSA, AND STSCI

This image released by NASA on Tuesday, July 12, 2022, shows the Southern Ring Nebula for the first time in mid-infrared light. It is a hot, dense white dwarf star, according to NASA. NASA, ESA, CSA, AND STSCI

This image released by NASA on Tuesday, July 12, 2022, shows the bright star at the center of NGC 3132, the Southern Ring Nebula, for the first time in near-infrared light. NASA, ESA, CSA, AND STSCI

This image provided by NASA on Tuesday, July 12, 2022, shows Stephan's Quintet, a visual grouping of five galaxies captured by the Webb Telescope's Near-Infrared Camera (NIRCam) and Mid-Infrared Instrument (MIRI). This mosaic was constructed from almost 1,000 separate image files, according to NASA. NASA, ESA, CSA, AND STSCI

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:
- **Red:** Least safe
- **Orange**
- **Yellow**
- **Blue**
- **Green:** Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

By SETH BORENSTEIN
AP SCIENCE WRITER

GREENBELT, Md. (AP)— A sparkling landscape of baby stars. A foamy blue and orange view of a dying star. Five galaxies in a cosmic dance. The splendors of the universe glowed

See BABY on Page 4

Republican Party has 31 candidates

» Hofschneider, Cruz seeking re-election

Cruz

Hofschneider

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

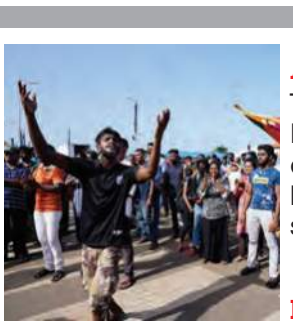
Senate President Jude U. Hofschneider and Sen. Francisco Q. Cruz are seeking re-election as senators for Ti-

See REPUBLICAN on Page 4

INSIDE

NATION
A wave of anger sweeps through Uvalde over footage of police officers milling in the school's hallway.

PAGE 12



ASIA
The president of Sri Lanka had fled the country, just hours before he was due to step down.

PAGE 13

LIFE & STYLE
"Succession" has received a leading 25 Emmy nominations, but has a rival in "Squid Game."

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SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

GOT A NEWS TIP? TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

Local

Torres re-nominates Sablan to CEC board

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres has re-nominated Commonwealth Election Commission board chair Jesus I. Sablan to serve as a member of the CEC board representing the Third Senatorial District, or Saipan and the Northern Islands.

CEC executive director Kayla Igitol said yesterday that Sablan accepted the re-nomination.

The CEC will hold a general election this Nov. 8.

In his letter Thursday to Senate President Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian), Torres said he is confident that Sablan will continue to be an asset on the commission.

The appointment requires the advice and consent of the Senate. If confirmed, the 74-year-old Sablan will serve another four-year term that will expire on July 21, 2026. Sablan's current term is expiring this July 21.

Torres also notified Sablan Thursday that his willingness to serve the CEC board and the people of the CNMI is most appreciated.

"I am confident that you are qualified and you will continue to devote your time and efforts to represent the interest of our community in this important board," the governor told the chairman in a letter.

At a CEC board meeting last June 30, Sablan disclosed that he, through Igitol, had informed Torres that he won't be accepting any re-appointment to the post for personal reasons.

However, during that board meeting, it appears that no commissioner wanted to serve as board chairman. and the commissioners then agreed to table or postpone the election of officers to their next board meeting.

Sablan has been a CEC commissioner for 15 years. The board elected him in August 2020 as chairman, a position that he has been holding since 2018.

NMC receives favorable audit opinion

For fiscal year 2021, Northern Marianas College has received—for the 15th consecutive year—a favorable or unqualified audit opinion on its financial statements.

An unqualified opinion means that the financial statements present fairly, in all material aspects, the financial position of the Northern Marianas College, and conform with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States.

NMC continues to be designated as a "low risk" auditee by its independent auditors. This designation means less administrative burden for the institution in applying for and administering grants, fewer audit requirements, and higher confidence in the institution by federal agencies and the community.

The audit noted that the college continues to meet the CNMI's workforce needs. In the report the auditors stated that "NMC was able to provide direct support and transition students into the much-needed workforce shortages created from COVID-19."

The report added that the growing number of graduates is "further evidence that more and more residents of the Northern Mariana Islands are looking to NMC for their professional advancement and personal growth as well as turning to the college to reskill or upskill themselves for the rapidly changing workforce."

Additionally, no material weaknesses were identified and there were no questioned costs.

However, there were audit findings identified that pertained to the timely processing of employees' contract renewal paperwork and travel authorizations. The college has identified action items to address these findings and will continue to strengthen its procedures to avoid delays in processing the documents.

"I commend our team at the Finance Office and other departments for their diligence and strict adherence to internal controls and sound financial management," said NMC president Galvin Deleon Guerrero, EdD.

According to NMC's chief financial officer David Attao, recommendations were made by the independent auditors to help improve the college's finance and procurement procedures and NMC is committed to and has taken appropriate measures for continuous improvement.

A copy of NMC's financial audit, prepared by Burger Comer Magliari, has been transmitted to the Office of the Public Auditor and all other required entities. ***(NMC)***

Municipal council group finalizes draft constitutional amendment language

The officers and members of the newly formed Pacific Alliance of Municipal Councils or PAMC recently convened on Saipan for the alliance's monthly meeting, and to review the draft final language on an initiative for a constitutional amendment under "Article Vl: Local Government" that the PAMC members have been working on in the last several months.

The goal of the initiative is to strengthen, clarify, and expand the constitutional powers and duties of the municipal councils—to introduce and pass ordinances, and be a part of the review and approval process of the mayor's municipal budget requests from locally generated revenues.

In addition, it is the intent of the initiative to provide constitutional duties to the municipal councils to have direct participation in CNMI and federally funded programs extended to the mayor's office.

More importantly, the goal of the initiative is to allow the municipal council oversight in the governance of all local matters of predominately local nature within their jurisdiction of the municipality, not pre-empted by any Commonwealth law.

The officers of the PAMC will launch an educational outreach to the community within each of their respective senatorial districts immediately after the proposed initiative is approved by the attorney general and the Legislature. Thereafter, the approved final form of the initiative will be forwarded to the CNMI board of election to be included in the upcoming November 2022 general election.

The members of the PAMC include the 16th Saipan and Northern Islands Municipal Council chaired by Ana Demapan Castro, 18th Tinian and Aguiguan Municipal Council chaired by Joseph E. Santos, and the 18th Rota Municipal Council chaired by Jonovan H. Lizama. ***(PR)***

Taimanao third to file candidacy for Rota mayor

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

U.S. Army veteran Alfredo Taisacan Taimanao filed yesterday before the Commonwealth Election Commission in Susupe his candidacy for mayor of Rota as an independent candidate.

CEC executive director Kayla Igitol said Taimanao submitted his nominating petition and candidacy documents.

Taimanao is the third to file a candidacy for Rota mayor since the CEC started accepting Monday the nominating petitions and candidacy documents.

Igitol also disclosed yesterday that they only managed to get eight individuals registered during their voter registration drive on Rota last July 8.

For the first time in Rota history, six individuals are running for mayor in the Nov. 8 general elections.

Sen. Teresita A. Santos (Ind-Rota) and Magdalena San Nicolas Mesngon filed Monday their candidacies for mayor of Rota, both as independent candidates.

Mesngon is currently a Head Start teacher. She previously served as director of Rota's Community and Cultural Affairs.

The three others running for mayor are Aubrey Hocog, Harry Masga, and Rodney Taisacan.

Hocog is running under the Republican Party. She is the Commonwealth Economic Development Authority board chairwoman. She is currently working for the Rota Mayor's Office.

Masga is employed by the Rota office of U.S. Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP).

Taisacan is a former Commonwealth Ports Authority seaport director.

It is not clear yet who the NMI Democratic Party's bet is for Rota mayor.

Jonathan Cabrera, interim chair of the NMI Democratic Party, said yesterday that once the CEC has formally endorsed all their candidates, they will make a formal announcement with their list of candidates.

Carol Lee is named to dean's list at Georgia Tech for spring sem

ATLANTA, GA—Carol Lee of Saipan made the dean's list for the spring 2022 semester at the Georgia Institute of Technology. This designation is awarded to undergraduate students who have earned a 3.0 or higher academic average for the semester.

The Georgia Institute of Technology, or Georgia Tech, is a top 10 public research university developing leaders who advance technology and improve the human condition.

The Institute offers business, computing, design, engineering, liberal arts, and sciences degrees. Its nearly 44,000 students, representing 50 states and 149 countries, study at the main campus in Atlanta, at campuses in France and China, and through distance and online learning. ***(PR)***

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2017 KIA SPORTAGE LE
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2019 TOYOTA TACOMA TRD
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2017 HYUNDAI ELANTRA SE (SOLD)
SALE PRICE $11,995 | 91,900 MILES | STK: 22M104A | KBB: $12,598

2016 MAZDA CX-5 TOURING
SALE PRICE $16,995 | 80,103 MILES | STK: 16P427 | KBB: $18,150

2018 MAZDA CX-5 TOURING
SALE PRICE $22,995 | 63,255 MILES | STK:18P398 | KBB: $23,263

2018 FORD F-150 XLT
SALE PRICE $29,995 | 40,904 MILES | STK:18R289 | KBB: $30,387

2017 TOYOTA YARIS HATCHBACK
SALE PRICE $14,995 | 69,990 MILES | STK: 21M012A | KBB: $15,515

2020 HYUNDAI ELANTRA SE
SALE PRICE $19,995 | 18,200 MILES | STK: 21H079A | KBB: $20,397

2015 JEEP WRANGLER SPORT (SOLD)
SALE PRICE $25,995 | 69,955 MILES | STK:5P279 | KBB: $39,134

2010 FORD RAPTOR SVT
SALE PRICE $39,995 | 49,102 MILES | STK:10P447 | KBB: $41,563

2016 TOYOTA YARIS HATCHABCK
SALE PRICE $14,995 | 67,000 MILES | STK: 16P436 | KBB: $14,892

2018 HYUNDAI TUCSON GL
SALE PRICE $19,995 | 45,500 MILES | STK: 22M051A | KBB: $22,605

2018 TOYOTA CAMRY XLE
SALE PRICE $26,995 | 33,750 MILES | STK:22M050A | KBB: $27,271

2018 TOYOTA 4RUNNER SR5
SALE PRICE $39,995 | 17,000 MILES | STK:18P411 | KBB: $42,150

2018 KIA FORTE HATCHABCK
SALE PRICE $16,995 | 10,601 MILES | STK: 18HS950 | KBB: $17,059

2018 HYUNDAI KONA
SALE PRICE $19,995 | 24,415 MILES | STK: 21D129A | KBB: $19,455

2020 TOYOTA C-HR LE
SALE PRICE $26,995 | 16,910 MILES | STK: 20P413 | KBB: $27,407

2019 KIA STINGER GT2
SALE PRICE $44,995 | 18,501 MILES | STK:19P455 | KBB: $45,870

2018 MAZDA MAZDA6 GT
SALE PRICE $16,995 | 56,727 MILES | STK: 16P390A | KBB: $17,845

2018 HONDA CIVIC LX
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DFEMS receives 158 sets of head-to-toe PPEs

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres is joined by Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services officials and staff, as well as officials from the Northern Marianas Housing Corp., during the turnover yesterday of fire-resistant PPEs, or Personal Protective Equipment.

KIMBERLY ESMORES

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services received yesterday its largest batch of fire-resistant PPEs, or Personal Protective Equipment, that was funded through the Northern Marianas Housing Corp.'s Community Development Block Grant, CDBG, program.

NMHC officially turned over yesterday to DFEMS 158 sets of head-to-toe PPEs. Gov. Ralph DLG Torres was also present for the unveiling of the PPEs.

According to Zenie Mafnas, NMHC deputy corporate director, the total grant application for the PPEs was about $644,000 for 158 sets.

"DFEMS has been very diligent in submitting proposals almost every year. Since 2007 to date, we've granted DFEMS about $2.5 million. The PPEs are a mixture of program year 2020-2021 funding. We just ask that DFEMS distribute these PPEs to all three islands for all firefighters," she said.

In a statement from Fire Capt. Jayendran Jairam, DFEMS Logistics Division officer in charge, he shared how grateful DFEMS was for the PPEs, which he said is the largest batch DFEMS has received by far.

Of the 158 sets, about 24 sets of PPEs will be given to Tinian and about 22 sets will be distributed to Rota, he added.

"We just want to say that we appreciate this allocation from the bottom of our hearts as this was the largest batch of PPE that was given to us by NMHC and we are very grateful and thankful for their assistance. Now we have head-to-toe PPEs, which gives us the protection we need to respond to any burning building at any given time to protect property and save lives. They've assisted us with our wildland truck, fire pumper truck, and ambulances for the past 15 years but this is by far the largest allocation from CDBG," he said.

Torres said it's always nice to give CNMI front-liners new equipment. "These equipment will protect them from fire, and ultimately help them provide the best service to their community. Congratulations to DFEMS, they took the initiative to apply for this CDBG-DR grant. Congratulation," he said.

Torres added that it is, and will always be, the administration's priority to support front-liners like DFEMS and Department of Public Safety.

"We don't just say that and not back it up. We've given DPS new vehicles and new equipment, as well as DFEMS. DFEMS also got new fire trucks a few years ago, and then now new equipment. As you know, not just during the pandemic, but with every disaster that we have faced, our front-liners are always the first ones there. They give hope to our community for public safety. So it is important for us to take care of all of them so they know that the administration will continue to support them in not just equipment but as well as with their salaries. At the end of the day, the more we take care of our front-liners, the better it is for all of us," he said.

BABY

From Page 1

in a new batch of images released Tuesday from NASA's powerful new telescope.

The unveiling from the $10 billion James Webb Space Telescope began Monday at the White House with a sneak peek of the first shot—a jumble of distant galaxies that went deeper into the cosmos than humanity has ever seen.

Tuesday's releases showed parts of the universe seen by other telescopes. But Webb's sheer power, distant location from Earth and use of the infrared light spectrum showed them in a new light that scientists said was almost as much art as science.

"It's the beauty but also the story," NASA senior Webb scientist John Mather, a Nobel laureate, said after the reveal. "It's the story of where did we come from."

And, he said, the more he looked at the images, the more he became convinced that life exists elsewhere in those thousands of stars and hundreds of galaxies.

With Webb, scientist hope to glimpse light from the first stars and galaxies that formed 13.7 billion years ago, just 100 million years from the universe-creating Big Bang. The telescope also will scan the atmospheres of alien worlds for possible signs of life.

"Every image is a new discovery and each will give humanity a view of the humanity that we've never seen before," NASA Administrator Bill Nelson said Tuesday, rhapsodizing over images showing "the formation of stars, devouring black holes."

Webb's use of the infrared light spectrum allows the telescope to see through the cosmic dust and see faraway light from the corners of the universe, scientists said.

"We've really changed the understanding of our universe," said European Space Agency director general Josef Aschbacher.

The European and Canadian space agencies joined NASA in building the telescope, which was launched in December after years of delays and cost overruns. Webb is considered the successor to the highly successful, but aging Hubble Space Telescope.

Some of Hubble's most stunning images have been shots of the Carina nebula, one of the bright stellar nurseries in the sky, about 7,600 light-years away. Webb project scientist Klaus Pontoppidan decided to focus one of Webb's early gazes on that location because he knew it would be the frameable beauty shot. The result was an image of a colorful landscape of bubbles and cavities where stars were being born.

"This is art," Pontoppidan said. "I really wanted to have that landscape. It has that contrast. We have the blue. We have golden. There's dark. There's bright. There's just a sharp image."

On tap for release Thursday: A close-up of Jupiter that shows one of its faint rings and a few of its moons, he said.

REPUBLICAN

From Page 1

nian under the NMI Republican Party, which is fielding a total of 31 candidates, including several new faces, for this Nov. 8 general elections.

A copy of the NMI Republican Party's list of candidates obtained by *Saipan Tribune* yesterday shows that the party, led by Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, who is seeking re-election with Sen. Vinnie F. Sablan as his running mate, has a full-slate of candidates for the Senate and mayors for Saipan, Rota, Tinian, and the Northern Islands.

The GOP also has a full-slate of candidates for the House of Representatives, except for Precinct 1, where the party has five bets for six positions.

The Republican Party has yet to disclose whether it has a candidate to challenge the candidacy of Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP), who is seeking his eight term as CNMI delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives.

For the Senate Saipan seats, Rep. Angel A. Demapan and former representative Janet U. Maratita are running.

For the Tinian Senate seats, Hofschneider and Cruz are seeking re-election.

For the Rota Senate seats, Rota Mayor Efraim M. Atalig and special assistant for Department of Homeland Security Dennis C. Mendiola are the GOP's bets.

For House Precinct 1, the Republican Party has only one incumbent representative who is seeking re-election—Rep. Roy A. Ada. The four other candidates are Frankie Fernando Angel, Arlene Marie M. Reyes, Patrick Cepeda, and Lucinda R. Salepeo.

For House Precinct 2, the candidates are Keith C. Ada and Eric B. Esteves.

For House Precinct 3, Grace Sablan, Ana Demapan Castro, Quiad O. Ngirchongor, Alfred L. Saures, Carl Hocog, and Joaquin Sablan make up the full slate.

For House Precinct 4, Cecilia R. Taitano and David Randy R. Sablan are running.

For House Precinct 5, the GOP is fielding Lorenzo I. Deleon Guerrero and Thomas John DLC Manglona.

For House Precinct 6 (Tinian), Rep. Patrick H. San Nicolas is seeking re-election.

For House Precinct 7 (Rota), Ivan T. Mereb Jr. is running.

For mayors, the party has Rep. Joseph Lee Pan T. Guerrero for Saipan, Tinian Mayor Edwin P. Aldan is seeking re-election, Commonwealth Economic Development Authority board chair Aubry M. Hocog is competing for Rota, and Valentino N. Taisacan Jr. is gunning for the Northern Islands.

Jonathan Cabrera, interim chair of the NMI Democratic Party, said yesterday that once the CEC has formally endorsed all their candidates, they will make a formal announcement on their list of candidates.

MEDICAL

From Page 1

before opting for an off-island medical referral. This, according to CHCC CEO Esther Muna, will ensure the program's sustainability.

She said he CNMI's Medical Referral program has been heavily underfunded and has been operating far beyond its means for many years, resulting in millions of dollars in deficit.

"The program has always been under-budgeted. If I'm not mistaken, about $2 million is allocated to the program every year but the program actually spends about $18 million," she said.

Fortunately, this year, through the federal American Rescue Plan Act, the Medical Referral program was allocated $15 million in total and, instead of exhausting the funds straight away, CHCC is currently taking the necessary strides to ensure that this money is used as a revolving fund for the program.

"ARPA isn't going to be here forever. What we're trying to do is make use of that money as a revolving fund and that, ultimately, if we spend some of it, we would get reimbursement for it from other entities like Medicaid, as they cover for transfers, and hopefully through some changes also be able to get reimbursement for lodging and other accommodations. We want this funding be able to sustain the program so when you need it, it's there," she said.

Since taking over the program back in October 2021, CHCC has taken steps toward a more sustainable Medical Referral program and the first order of business was taking a hard look into the program's regulations in order to develop policies that comply with such regulations.

"The first thing we did was really look at the regulations and there was a lot of things there that really describes what we should do and what we shouldn't do. One of the first things that we are working on, as we are still in transition, is the development of some policies and procedures that are basically aligned with the regulations," she said.

One of the policies that have been put in place, Muña said, has basically been a more intensive review process of each program applicant. This means Medical Referral program staff now closely look into each Medical Referral applicant to ensure that if there are any other medical benefits available to them, they exhaust these benefits first before resorting to Medical Referral program funds.

"The main purpose of the medical referral program is really to provide help for people that need medical attention, usually in emergency situations like life or death, that if a service is not available in the CNMI or at CHCC, we assist in the transfers of these individuals or referrals. So one of the regulations of the Medical Referral program specifically states that you use Medical Referral funds as a last resort," Muña said.

The goal, Muña explained, is to make sure that members of the community don't look at the Medical Referral program as a sort of an insurance policy, but rather as a resource of last resort. By doing so, the Medical Referral program will remain reserved for medical referral applicants who really do not have any other means of getting the needed medical attention off island without going into even more debt.

"The Medical Referral program is not a payer. When I say a payer, it means it is not an insurance company. So, that›s one thing that I want to clarify—that the program is not an insurance company. The other thing is that the medical referral requires that you look at resources, whether it›s federal, or any other resources, that can pay before you start using the Medical Referral program. That›s what it means by being the resource for last resort," she added.

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GENERAL JOB DESCRIPTION:

This is an exempt professional position responsible for the management of office/program fiscal systems including but not limited to all accounts receivables and program expenditures. The Fiscal Officer is selected by and reports to the Executive Director and works under limited supervision within prescribed standards, policies and procedures.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

- ✓ Bachelor's Degree (B.A. and/or B.S.) in a field related to work of this position or no less than 120 credit hours from an accredited post-secondary school in areas related to the work of this position;
- ✓ No less than four (4) years of experience that demonstrates a thorough understanding of federal and/or state grants management systems and any applicable policies, laws and other relevant regulations; and
- ✓ No less than four (4) years of experience that demonstrates a thorough understanding of accounting and/or auditing concepts as they apply to state and federal government funds.

HOW TO APPLY:
Interested applicants may pick up a complete job description and application forms at the NMPASI office located on middle road approximately 100 yards north of the Gualo Rai traffic light intersection. Completed application must be submitted to the Executive Director at the NMPASI Office. In order for applications to be considered they must include (1) a **Cover Letter** (2) a **Resume**' and (3) **Completed Application forms**. Incomplete Application and/or applications which do not demonstrate that the applicant meets the minimum qualifications as listed above or do no meet the deadline for submittal do not meet will not be considered. For further information, please feel free to contact **Mr. Gregory Borja at (670) 235-7273/4 (Voice)/ (670) 287-0652 (Message) or email at gborja@nmpasi.org. NMPASI is an EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER.**

DEADLINE TO SUBMIT APPLICATION WILL BE ON AUGUST 12, 2022 AT 4PM

LEGAL NOTICE

IF YOU OWN OR LEASE OR PREVIOUSLY OWNED, PURCHASED OR LEASED A 2010-2015 PRIUS OR 2012-2017 PRIUS V, YOU COULD GET BENEFITS FROM A CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT.

The Settlement does not involve personal injury, death, or property damage.

Para una notificación en Español, visite nuestro sitio de Web.

There is a proposed class action settlement alleging certain Toyota Prius and Prius V vehicles contained defective inverters. Toyota denies the allegations. The Court has not ruled on these claims. This notice is to inform you about the settlement and summarize your options. For complete details see the Long Form Notice, the Settlement Agreement, and the Settlement FAQs at **www.ToyotaPriusInverterSettlement.com**.

Who Is Included?

You are a Class Member for settlement purposes only and may be eligible for benefits if you:

(a) Currently own or lease a 2010-2015 Prius or 2012-2017 Prius V vehicle that was the subject of Safety Recall E0E, F0R, J0V, and/or 20TA10 ("Subject Vehicle"), as of **May 19, 2022**; or

(b) Owned or leased a Subject Vehicle any time before **May 19, 2022**.

What Does the Settlement Provide?

The settlement provides these benefits:

(i) **Customer Confidence Program**: A 20-year/unlimited-mileage warranty enhancement, providing cost-free repair or replacement of the Intelligent Power Module ("IPM") or Inverter under certain conditions, starting from your Prius or Prius V's first day in service, with an appeal process for any denials. For important details about benefits and appeal rights/deadlines review *FAQ #10*.

(ii) **Cost-free loaner and/or towing program if certain conditions are met**. For details about benefits and appeal rights/deadlines see *FAQ #11*.

(iii) **Reimbursement**: There is a replenishable $20,000,000 settlement fund to pay for reimbursement of unreimbursed IPM and Inverter repairs and replacements and/or related towing and rental car expenses incurred before the Final Effective Date, currently expected to be February 12, 2023, subject to change. To receive a reimbursement, you must file a claim. For details see *FAQ #12*.

(iv) **Redistribution Check**: If there is any money left in the settlement fund after reimbursement claims are paid, you may get a check from the Redistribution Fund. **If you replaced an IPM or inverter and did NOT receive notice that you are automatically registered for thispotential benefit, you must submit a timely Registration and Reimbursement Claim Form to be eligible**. For details see *FAQ #13*.

(v) **Possible charitable, *cy pres* payments**. If the Settlement Fund has a balance after Redistribution Checks are sent, that balance will go to Texas A&M University Transportation Institute. See *FAQ #14*.

What are Your Options?

- **Do Nothing**. You will be legally bound by decisions of the Court and you will give up any rights to sue for these claims.
- **Opt-Out**. If you do not want to be bound by the Settlement, you must exclude yourself by **October 26, 2022**.
- **Object to the Settlement**. You may submit an objection and explain why you do not like the settlement by **October 26, 2022**. You cannot both exclude yourself and object to the settlement. Please see *FAQ #21* for important details/requirements.
- **File a Claim for Reimbursement and/or Register for Redistribution Check**: You must submit a Registration and Reimbursement Claim Form to get reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses. **If you replaced an IPM or inverter and did NOT receive notice that you are automatically registered for the Redistribution benefit, you must also register to be eligible to receive money from the Redistribution Fund, if available**. The deadline to submit is three months after the Final Effective Date, and is currently anticipated to be **May 12, 2023**, but is likely subject to change.

The Court will hold a hearing on **January 13, 2023** at **10:30 a.m.** at First Street United States Courthouse, 350 West 1st St., Los Angeles, CA, 90012, Courtroom 8A to hear any objections, determine if the Settlement is fair, and consider the Settlement Master's recommendation that Class Counsel be awarded $19.6 million in fees and expenses and a Service Award for Class Representatives of $5,000 each, paid separately by Toyota. For details review *FAQ #23*. You may attend the Hearing but are not required to. Please see *FAQ #25* for requirements.

Where Can I Find More Information?

This is only a summary. If you have questions or want more information about this lawsuit, the settlement and your rights, visit **www.toyotapriusinvertersettlement.com**. call **833-942-3997**, or write to: Prius IPM Settlement Notice Administrator, c/o Kroll Notice Administration, P.O. Box 5324, New York, NY 10150-5324. ALL DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. CHECK WEBSITE FOR REVISIONS & OTHER UPDATES.

www.ToyotaPriusInverterSettlement.com
833-942-3997

HANMI occupancy at 41% in June

The Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands reported 41% average occupancy rate among its 12 member-hotels in June 2022, compared to 10% average occupancy in June 2021.

A total of 23,522 of 56,960 available room nights sold during June 2022, compared to 3,391 of 34,524 available rooms sold in June 2021. Average room rates were $138.89 compared to $144.61 last June.

"Two major factors played into the four-fold jump in bookings this June compared to June year ago," said HANMI chair Ivan Quichocho. "The first was 54 direct flights during the month from South Korea. This compares to zero direct flights from South Korea last June before the Tourism Resumption Investment Plan was launched by the government and tourism partners. The second factor was the large number of bookings made during the Pacific Mini Games."

Quichocho, who is also chairman of TRIP and a member of the Marianas Visitors Authority board of directors, urged for continued support of the tourism office's work in the coming year.

"During the Pacific Mini Games, we saw Saipan's largest hotel—Grandvrio Resort Saipan—open up temporarily to accommodate the demand for rooms. However, in order to bring in enough visitors to keep Grandvrio, other hotels, and other tourism businesses operating, we need to ensure the MVA receives significant funding in the new fiscal year to continue its marketing and promotions, especially to grow demand from Japan, which will restart direct flights to Saipan on Sept. 1, 2022. The success of TRIP Korea can be repeated, but the MVA must be supported in order to achieve that. We still have a long ways to go to recover the economy."

Hotels included in HANMI's monthly statistical report are Aqua Resort Club, Aquarius Beach Tower, Century Hotel, GrandVrio Resort Saipan, Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan, Hyatt Regency Saipan, Kanoa Resort Saipan, Kensington Hotel Saipan, LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort, Saipan World Resort, Surfrider Resort Hotel, and Pacific Islands Club Saipan. The occupancy rates do not include venue rentals at Kanoa Resort Saipan for government COVID-19 quarantine accommodations.

HANMI was established in 1985 as a professional forum for the hospitality industry of the Marianas. HANMI also makes regular charitable donations to support non-profit organizations and tourism-related government projects. ***(PR)***

Harris vows US will strengthen its Pacific islands relationships

SUVA, Fiji (AP)—U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris assured Pacific island leaders of more U.S. engagement after acknowledging Wednesday the United States may not have previously provided the diplomatic attention the region deserved.

Harris' virtual address to the Pacific Islands Forum, meeting in the Fijian capital Suva, comes as China vies for more influence in the Indo-Pacific region.

She proposed new embassies in Tonga and in Kiribati, a Micronesian state that split this week from the 18-nation forum in a major blow to regional harmony.

Harris

Harris also proposed requesting that the U.S. Congress triple funding for fisheries assistance to $60 million a year and appoint the first U.S. envoy to the forum.

"The United States is a proud Pacific nation and has an enduring commitment to the Pacific islands which is why President Joe Biden and I seek to strengthen our partnership with you," Harris said.

"We recognize that in recent years the Pacific islands may not have received the diplomatic attention and support that you deserve. So today I am here to tell you directly, we are going to change that," she added.

Harris' commitment was welcomed by Fijian Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama, the forum chair who invited her to speak.

Her invitation was remarkable given that the forum's dialogue partners — including the United States, China, Britain and France — have not been invited to this year's summit.

"I think it is clear to see that the U.S. is certainly looking a lot more like the Pacific partner we have traditionally held it to be," Bainimarama said.

The United States and the forum's wealthiest nations, Australia and New Zealand, are concerned about a security pact signed this year between China and Solomon Islands.

They fear the pact could lead to a Chinese navy base being established in the South Pacific less than 2,000 kilometers (1,200 miles) from the Australian northeast coast.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese arrived in Suva on Wednesday and plans to hold a bilateral meeting with Solomons Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare.

Albanese's government was elected in May with promises of more action on climate change and an additional 525 million Australian dollars ($358 million) spent on regional aid. Climate change is the forum's greatest security concern.

Australia also has a security pact with Solomon Islands and Australian police have been maintaining peace in the capital Honiara since violence late last year.

The new Australian government has described the China-Solomons pact as Australia's worst policy failure in the Pacific since World War II.

Albanese acknowledged in Suva that Australia in recent years has "not paid enough attention" to the Pacific island region. "And I know that the Biden Administration has said that," he added.

"I very much welcome the increased engagement of the United States in the region," Albanese said, describing the support package Harris proposed as "significant."

Telemedicine abortion continues in Guam after *Roe* is overturned

HONOLULU (AP)—Guam's attorney general said a 1990 law that prohibited virtually all abortion is invalid and won't take effect even though the U.S. Supreme Court last month overturned the national right to abortion outlined in Roe v. Wade, the landmark case that legalized abortion nationwide.

That means the status quo allowing women to obtain abortions via telemedicine may continue in the predominantly Catholic U.S. territory in the Pacific.

Attorney General Leevin Taitano Camacho issued his opinion last week in response to questions from senators as to whether the overturning of Roe v. Wade would affect the 1990 law.

That law made it a felony for a doctor to perform abortion except to save a woman's life or prevent grave danger to her health. The U.S. District Court on Guam blocked it from being enforced in 1992, citing Roe v. Wade. The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld this ruling.

Camacho told senators in a memorandum the 1990 law violated the U.S. Constitution and the Organic Act of Guam. He said the Legislature didn't have the power to pass it in the first place, rendering it void.

Instead, abortion on Guam continues to be governed by a 1978 law allowing abortion in the first 13 weeks of pregnancy. This law also allows the procedure up to 26 weeks in the case of rape or incest, if a child would be born with a grave physical or mental defect or if there's a substantial risk the pregnancy could endanger the life or health of the mother.

In practice, however, the last Guam physician to perform surgical abortions retired in 2018. That means the only way for people to legally obtain abortions without leaving the island is to take pills sent through the mail. This is generally only possible through 10 or 11 weeks gestation.

Traveling to get an abortion is particularly onerous for Guam's residents as the island is 3,800 miles (6,100 kilometers) west of Hawaii, the nearest U.S. state where the procedure is legal.

A 2012 Guam law also required those getting abortions to be provided with information about the procedure in person 24 hours beforehand.

A judge in September issued an injunction against that provision, saying the information could be provided via live face-to-face videoconference instead.

Guam's attorney general on June 28 asked the 9th Circuit to reverse this injunction, citing the Supreme Court's overturning of Roe v. Wade and related precedents.

Alexa Kolbi-Molinas, the deputy director of the ACLU Reproductive Freedom Project, said she hopes the appeals court will keep the injunction.

"But even if that injunction is lifted, it is important to remember that telemedicine abortion will remain legal in Guam," she said in an email. "And we will keep fighting to lift burdensome, and medically unnecessary obstacles that make it more difficult for people to get the care they need."

Camacho told lawmakers in his memorandum that after the overturning of Roe v. Wade, it was up to the Legislature and not the courts to decide whether to allow or limit abortion. He said the Legislature could "forge its own path" on the matter.

COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-22-034

PROVISION OF OPERATIONS, MAINTENANCE, AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR THE POWER GENERATION PLANT SYSTEMS ON THE ISLAND OF TINIAN

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the provision of operations, maintenance, and management services for the Power Plant Systems on the Island of Tinian, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of **$200.00** (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-22-034, Operations, Maintenance, and Management Services for The Power Plant Systems on the island of Tinian" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on July 28, 2022** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before submission deadline. Late submissions and conditional offers will not be considered.

A Payment Bond of one hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid or supply under the contract. The IFB does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the bid under this request, or to procure or contract for goods. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered proponents and must be submitted in writing **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on July 8, 2022,** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Marcela Tenorio, at email marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org and Christie Sablan at email christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and waive any defects in the said bids, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids submitted shall become the property of CUC.

CHRETIEN T. VOERG
Acting Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS (CNMI)
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS
Tel.: (670) 234-3751 • Website: www.dpl.gov.mp • Email: dpl@dpl.gov.mp

NOTICE OF PROPOSED LEASE OF PUBLIC LAND

In accordance with Section 106 (b) of Public Law 15-2, the Department of Public Lands hereby gives notice of its intent to lease certain public land in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Any interested parties of the general public may submit comments, data, views, or arguments of alternative proposals for the lease of the public land. As further provided by Public Law 15-2, the following pertinent information is required to be published.

i. The proposed lease of public landis described as Lot No. 126 D 01 containing an area of approximately 4,449 square meters, more or less, situated in Navy Hill, Saipan. A copy of the location of the parcel is available at the Department of Public Lands and website www.dpl.gov.mp for inspection.

ii. The prospective lessee is Creative Capital Corporation The lists of officers for Creative Capital Corporation are Angelina L. Villagomez President, Vice President/Secretary/Treasurer MA Rosario De La Torre.

iii. The proposed lease is compliant with DPL regulations and was negotiated by Ms. Angelina L. Villagomez.

iv. The lessee shall use the premises solely for the purpose of Childhood Education and Care Center.

The term of the public land lease agreement is 40 years.

The proposed annual rental during the term of the lease agreement is based on a percentage of the appraised fair market value of the property.

v. A copy of the proposed lease agreement may be obtained at the office of the Department of Public Lands, located on the 2nd floor of the JoetenDandan Commercial Building in Dandan, Saipan; 1st floor of the De'Ana Commercial Building, Songsong Village, Rota; or the 1st floor of the Kings Commercial Building, Tinian. A copy will also be available online at www.dpl.gov.mp

vi. The Department of Public Lands has received no alternative proposals to lease the subject public land in ***Navy Hill, Saipan***.

vii. The Secretary of the Department of Public Lands shall accept written comments, views, arguments or alternative proposals from interested parties on or before, July 15, 2022 at the Department of Public Lands offices located in Saipan, Rota or Tinian.

NUTISIA PUT I MAPROPONI NA ATKILON TÅNU´ PUPBLIKU

Sigun gi Seksiona 106 (b) gi Lain Pupbliku 15-2, i Dipåttamentun Tanu' Pupbliku mannånå'i nutisia guini put i intension-ñiha para u ma'atkila metton na tanu' pupbliku giya Saipan, Commonwealth gi Sangkattan na Islas Mariånas. Maseha håyi na pattidå intirisao gi halum hinirårt pupbliku siña muna'hålum upiñon, infotmasion, pat testimoniun kinontra gi tinahguin prinoponi siha para i atkilon nu i tanu' pupbliku. Komu mapribeni mås mo'na ginen i Lain Pupbliku 15-2, i tinattitiyi pettanesi na infotmasion manisisita para u mapupblika.

i. I maproponi na atkilon tanu' pupbliku madiskribi komu Lot 126 D 01 ni kunsisssisti kåsi 4,449 square meters, ni gaigi gi hålum Navy Hill, iya Saipan. I kopian påttin i lugåt managuaha gi ufisinan Dipåttamentun Tanu' Pupbliku yan gi website i www.dpl.gov.mp para inspeksion.

ii. I prospective lessee i Creative Capital Corporation. I listan nu ufisiåt siha para i Creative Capital Corporation sa si Angelina L. Villagomez, komu Presidenti, Sigunda Presidenti/Sekritåria/Tresåriu si MA Rosario De La Torre.

iii. I maproponi na atkilon ha tattiyi i regulasion DPL siha yan ginen manegosiu ni as Siñorita Angelina L. Villagomez.

iv. I lessee debi na u usa i lugåt put atyu ha' na rason nu "Childhood Education" yan "Care Center".

I tema nu i maproponi na kuntråtan atkilon sa' kuarenta (40) åñus na tiempu.

I maproponi na atkilon gi kada' såkkan gi durântin i teman kuntråtan i atkilon mapega gi put sientus i bålin "appraised fair market" i propiedåt.

v. I kopian i maproponi na kuntråtan atkilon siña machuli' gi ufisinan i Dipåttamentun Tanu' Pupbliku, ni gaigi gi sigundu (2nd) na bibiendan i Joeten Dandan Commercial Building giya Dandan, Saipan, primet (1st) na bibiendan i De'Ana Commercial Building, giya Songsong Village, Luta; pat i primet (1st) na bibiendan nu i Kings Commercial Building, giya Tini'an. I kopia debi lokkui' na u managuaha online gi www.dpl.gov.mp

vi. I Dipåttamentun Tanu' Pupbliku tåya marisibi ni håfa na tinahguin inofresi siha ni para u ma'atkila i suhetu na tanu' pupbliku gi ***Navy Hill, Saipan.***

vii. I Sekritåriun Dipåttamentun Tanu' Pupbliku debi na u aksepta tinigi' upiñon, infotmasion, testimoniun kinontra pat tinahguin prinoponi siha ginin i manintirisão na pattida siha gi pat åntis di Hulio 15, 2022, gi ufisinan Dipåttamentun Tanu' Pupbliku siha ni gaigi giya Sa'ipan, Luta pat Tini'an.

ARONGORONGOL TOULAP REEL KKAPASAL PPWOMWOL ATKKILOONOOL

Sángi Tálil 106 (b) reel Alléghúl Toulap 15-2, Bwulasiyol Ammwelil Faluweer Toulap e attotoowow arongorong reel igha re mángemángil rebwe atkkilaay akkááw faluweer toulap Ilól Seipél, Commonwealth Téél Falúw kka Efáng Ilól Marianas. Schóó kka re mwuschel isiisilong kkapas, data, views, ngáre angiingi reel pommwol atkkilóónol faluweer toulap. Eyoor sángi Alléghúl Toulap 15-2, arongorong ikka e amwirimwiritiw ebwe akkatééwow.

i. Ppwomwol atkkilóónol faluweer toulap e bwáálló bwe Lot No. 126 D 01 e lo bwe 4,449 reel square meters, e lapaló ngáre eghus, iye e lo Navy Hill, Seipél. Eyoor pappidil falúw yeel me Bwulasiyol Ammwelil Faluweer Toulap me bwal wóól website me www.dpl.mp ngáre u mwuschel amwuri.

ii. Ppwomwol schóól atkkilóón nge Creative Capital Corporation. List-al officers ngáli Creative Capital Corporation nge Angelina L. Villagomez bwe Presidente, Vice President/Secretóória/Treasurer nge MA Rosario De La Torre.

iii. Ppwomwol atkkilóón nge e angúúngú fengál me mwóghutughutúl DPL me e abwungubwung sángi Ms. Angelina L. Villagomez.

iv. Schóól atkkilóón ebwe yááyá falúw ngáli Childhood Education me Care Center.

Ppwomwol abwungubwungúl atkkilóón nge fááigh ráágh.

Ppwomwol atkkilóón ghal ráágh nge e lo reel "percentage of the appraised fair market value" reel falúw.

v. Pappidil ppwomwol abwungubwungúl atkkilóón emmwel ubwe bweibwogh mereel Bwulasiyol Ammwelil Faluweer Toulap, iye e lo 2nd floor reel JoetenDandan Commercial Building me Dandan, Seipél, 1st floor me De'Ana Commercial Building, Apilómwol Songsong, Luuta; ngáre 1st floor me Kings Commercial Building me Tchiliyól. Ebwal yoor pappidil mille online me www.dpl.gov.mp

vi. Bwulasiyol Ammwelil Faluweer Toulap rese bweibwogh ppwomw iye e siiweli falúw reel atkkilóónol falúw me ***Navy Hill, Seipél***.

vii. Sekkretóóriyol Ammwelil Faluweer Toulap re bweibwogh ischil kkapas, "views", angiingi ngáre ppwomw ikka aa siiwel sángi schóó kka re mwuschel wóól ngáre mmwalil, Ullyo 15, 2022 me Bwulasiyol Ammwelil Faluweer Toulap imwu e lo wóól Seipél, Luuta ngáre Tchiliyól.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

Curtailing EPA is a bad ruling in a series of bad rulings by Supreme Court

The U.S. Supreme Court has been on a tear lately, to put it mildly. It wasn't enough that the court's conservative majority upended a half-century of precedent by ending the constitutional right to abortion. It also expanded gun rights despite the ongoing trauma of mass shootings and gun violence.

The court followed that with a ruling that dealt a punishing blow to this nation's ability to combat climate change by curbing carbon emissions and shifting to renewable sources of power.

The ruling essentially holds that because Congress, in passing the Clean Air Act a half-century ago, did not explicitly give the Environmental Protection Agency that ability, it lacks that authority. In his majority opinion, Chief Justice John Roberts wrote that the agency had interpreted "newfound power in the vague language" of the Clean Air act even as he acknowledged the sensibility of the EPA's proposed action.

"Capping carbon dioxide emissions at a level that will force a nationwide transition away from the use of coal to generate electricity may be a sensible 'solution to the crisis of the day,'" Roberts wrote. "But it is not plausible that Congress gave EPA the authority to adopt on its own such a regulatory scheme."

Roberts' reasoning—such as it is—was taken to task by Justice Elena Kagan. In her dissent, Kagan pointed out that "The enacting Congress told EPA to pick the 'best system of emission reduction'" for the time. "In selecting those words, Congress understood—it had to—that the 'best system' would change over time. Congress wanted and instructed EPA to keep up."

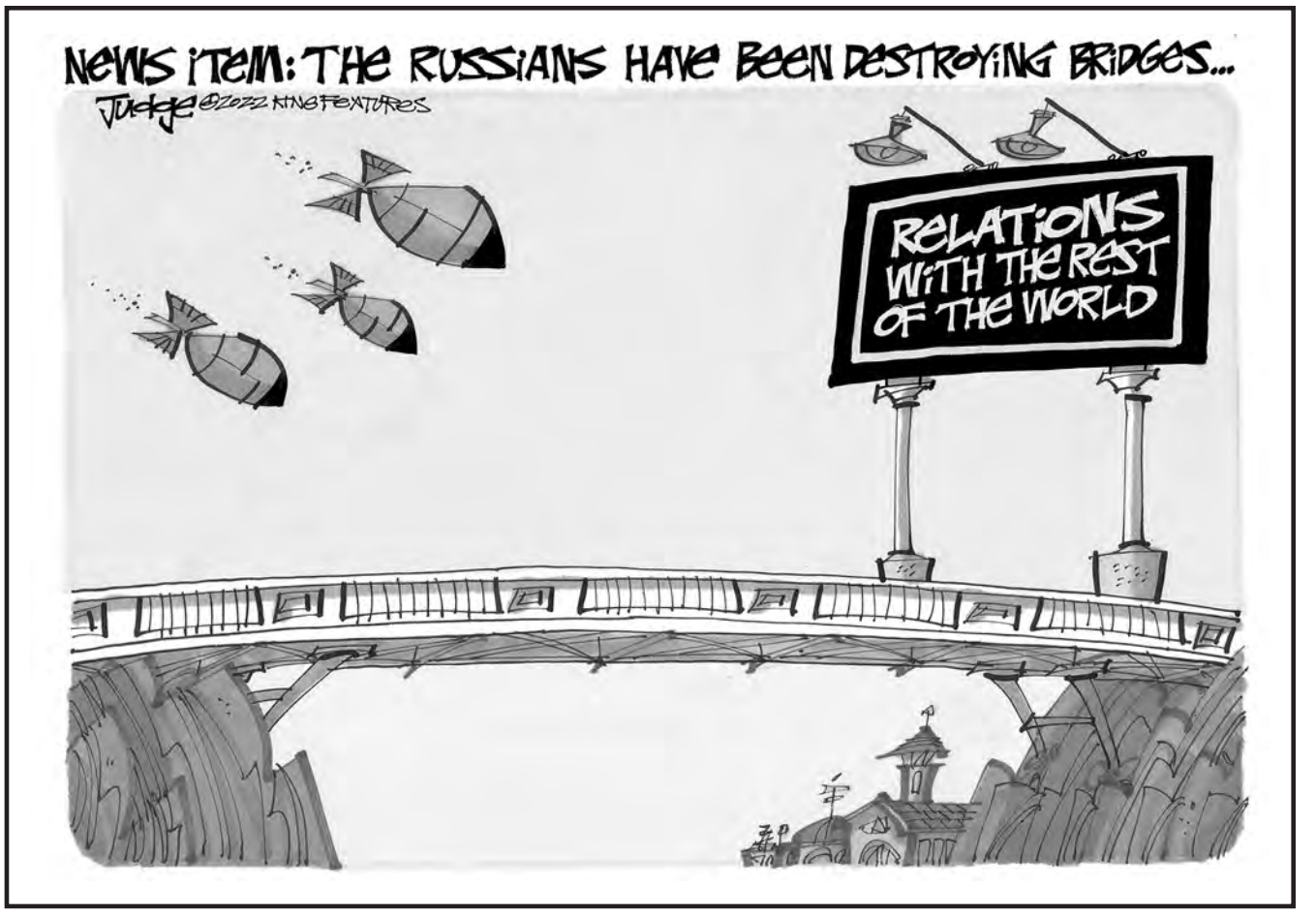
That makes sense. What does not make sense is Congress micromanaging agency policies. Roberts has said that "significant" policy decisions must get specific congressional approval. But who determines what is significant or plausible? The court that already seems predisposed to leaving everything to a 50-state fight?

President Joe Biden, whose goal has been an emissions-free power sector by 2035, called the ruling "another devastating decision that aims to take our country backwards."

Indeed. Except even the Supreme Court is not powerful enough to take us back to a time before climate change started inflicting extreme weather events across the globe. Roberts knows full well that Congress is so badly split on climate change that it has been unable to move forward for decades, even as warnings from the scientific community mounted and evidence of climate change became undeniable.

Now, before Biden has even had a chance to formulate his version of a clean power plan, the court has stepped in to ensure that the political dogfight over climate change will continue unabated. At the same time, we plunge deeper into

See EPA on Next Page



What kind of monsters would force a child to have a baby?

By ROBIN ABCARIAN
Los Angeles Times

You may have seen the shocking story: An abortion doctor associated with Indiana University was asked to provide care to a pregnant 10-year-old from Ohio, which has banned abortion after six weeks.

The story, published by the Indianapolis Star, gained traction because this is one of the predictable nightmare scenarios in our post-Roe world, where heartless legislators are outlawing abortion even in the case of rape, incest or to save the mother's life.

How can we be living in a country where a child who has been raped—because any child who turns up pregnant has, by definition, been raped—will have no choice in some states but to undergo a forced birth.

Was this story true, or apocryphal?

Indiana University Health wouldn't tell.

"Thanks for reaching out," a spokesperson told me by email. "I'm sorry, but we don't have any information to share." The Indianapolis Star stands by its account.

On Friday, President Joe Biden invoked the story when he slammed the Supreme Court for its bogus rationale in overturning Roe v. Wade and announced he would order the Justice Department and the Department of Health and Human Services to do everything in their power to protect access to abortion care, contraception and emergency care when a pregnancy endangers a mother's health.

He has also directed the attorney general to ensure "robust legal representation" for patients, providers and others who engage in reproductive healthcare and/or cross state lines to do so.

"This isn't some imagined horror," Biden said. "It's already happening."

With mounting anger, he said, "Imagine being that little girl. ... Ten years old! ... A 10-year-old girl should be forced to give birth to a rapist's child?"

Yes, Mr. President, that is exactly what the Supreme Court's conservative majority has unleashed.

If the increasingly aggressive religious conservatives who dominate the Supreme Court and red state legislatures have their way, a pregnant child will indeed be forced to bear a child. What kind of American dystopia have these Christian extremists wrought?

According to the Guttmacher Institute, an information clearinghouse that supports reproductive rights, just under 4% of the 930,160 abortions in 2020—or 37,206—were obtained by minors.

Guttmacher has not released current statistics for how many girls under 15 years old had abortions, but in 2014, they accounted for 0.2% of 926,000 abortions. That may seem like a vanishingly small percentage, but it amounts to 1,852 youngsters who were able to exercise the right to bodily autonomy.

"I think we are heading in a direction of increasing absolutism and punitiveness," Yale Law School professor Reva Siegel told the New York Times after the Supreme Court overturned the federal right to abortion and handed the matter back to the states.

As proof, Siegel offered the example of Mississippi, which has restricted abortion at the same time it has refused to expand postpartum Medicaid coverage. Mississippi has the highest rate of infant mortality in the country and one of the highest rates of maternal mortality, and will rip away health insurance from mothers a mere two months after they give birth, when they are still medically precarious.

Forcing girls, or anyone for that matter, to bear children is not just immoral, it's dangerous.

We've long known that abortion is one of the safest medical procedures. Childbirth, by contrast, is one of the most perilous.

"Pregnancy is often called a stress test that brings out underlying conditions that were not present," said Lauren Ralph, a UC San Francisco epidemiologist who co-authored the Turnaway Study, which examined the effects of unwanted pregnancies and the differences in outcomes between women who were able to obtain abortions and women who were not.

Pregnancy is incredibly taxing. It can lead to all sorts of maladies—hemorrhage, infection, high blood pressure, pulmonary embolism, anemia and worse.

"We found to our surprise that one of the more serious risks of unwanted pregnancies was maternal death," Ralph told me. "We identified two deaths in our study of just over 1,000 people. Both were people who were denied a wanted abortion and later went on to give birth."

Ralph, who researches adolescents and their decision-making around pregnancy and childbirth, said the study also found that women who wanted but were unable to obtain abortions reported being in poorer health after childbirth than women who

See MONSTERS on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Responsible gun owners want measures to help keep people safe

ByDR. CANDICE JONES
American Academy of Pediatrics

Dr. Candice Jones is a general pediatrician in private practice in Orlando, Florida, and a member of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

I'm a pediatrician and I own a gun.

That may surprise you. I own a handgun because I grew up with guns. My dad had a shotgun mounted in his truck and he hunted and provided food for his family. He emphasized gun safety, carefully supervised us children when we hunted with him and taught us how to shoot. My great-grandfather kept a gun in the house as a means of protection, and my husband and I uphold that safeguard in our home today. I even have a license to carry a concealed gun in Florida.

I was taught how to properly handle guns and I understand their power. I also know all too well the risks of children finding firearms, so my pistol is kept in a secure place.

I also support sensible gun measures to keep guns out of the hands of those who absolutely should not have them. I am not alone. A 2021 survey by the Pew Research Center found that 92% of Democrats and 70% of Republicans support background checks for private gun sales.

The gun legislation that recently was passed by Congress will expand background checks for would-be gun buyers under age 21, giving authorities up to 10 business days to study juvenile and mental health records. It also sets aside money for states to pay for intervention programs and to implement red flag laws that allow authorities to temporarily confiscate guns from someone a judge deems too dangerous to have them.

These are important steps, but we can do more. Law-abiding, responsible gun owners like me and others I know want federal firearm measures that keep people safe, including:

- Comprehensive background checks for anyone buying a gun
- Mandatory firearm safety training and licensing process
- Raising the age of gun ownership in all situations to 21, the same as the legal drinking age
- A ban on assault rifles and high-capacity magazines
- Funding for more research on gun violence to inform evidence-based reduction strategies and effective legislation

These measures can save many lives. They can't prevent every mass shooting, of course, but they could stop some would-be gunmen from taking lives.

The recent massacres at a school in Texas and at a grocery store in New York, for example, were committed by 18-year-old men whom authorities said legally bought military-style rifles. What might have happened if they'd been denied the ability to purchase these powerful weapons?

I am tired of living afraid. When I drop my children off at school in the morning, I feel a small knot of dread and wonder if someone with a gun will enter their school that day, making it the latest in a long line of shootings. As an African American woman, I also must worry about being shot at the grocery store or at church by someone with hate for others in his heart. And now I must wonder if holiday parades in my city are safe.

I serve families from underserved, marginalized communities, and gun violence is no stranger to my practice in Orlando. I've seen a teen following up after hospitalization for multiple gunshot wounds, suffering from post-traumatic stress and also trying to cope with the grief of losing a friend to gun violence.

Another teen, whose life was full of adversity and who suffered mental illness and substance use, shot and killed his caregiver in a fit of rage. I have seen siblings experiencing domestic violence that led to the death of their mother, who was shot by their father.

These children and families will never be the same. Gun violence now is the leading cause of death in children in the U.S. We must remember that these deaths are preventable, and Congress should act now. I am a gun owner, but my right to bear arms should never supersede the rights of children and families to be safe from gun violence in schools, while shopping, or while attending a special occasion.

So, I ask, pray and plead: Please act now and pass gun laws that can save lives.

Could Putin's actions be an opportunity for the US to wake up and change its ways?

By GRIFFIN THOMPSON
Chicago Tribune

Griffin Thompson is a retired State Department foreign policy official, now teaching foreign policy, energy, and climate change courses at Loyola University Chicago and the University of Chicago. He is also a Payne Fellow at the Payne Institute at the Colorado School of Mines.

To view the Russian leader as a gift may seem perverse. Yet, history teaches that growth, understanding and, dare I say, enlightenment typically depend on trauma, crisis and catastrophe. Putin has given us a healthy dose of all three and therein an opportunity to flourish. The Russian invasion of Ukraine follows a string of such "teachable moments" including the financial meltdown of 2009, the social upheavals of the #MeToo and Black Lives Matter movements, COVID-19, and of course the granddaddy of reflective inflection points, global climate change.

Each of these "events" should be seen as signals that something is dreadfully wrong and thus occasions to wake up and examine hardened habits of thought and action. Sadly, the gift that Putin is offering is being treated much like the other above-mentioned gifts in our refusal to awaken from our slumbering ways.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has rattled political leaders and the foreign policy establishment. Given the devastating nature and seismic implications of Putin's actions, one would have expected greater imagination from our politicians and pundits. While the Biden administration receives credit for the coalition it has mustered, its hackneyed framing of "autocracy versus democracy" tarnishes the luster. Biden is reflecting the foreign policy establishment's adherence to the simplistic good versus bad, friend versus foe dualistic mentality that cleaves originality from any solution. Suggestions that the U.S. may have provided a model for Putin's aggression through our past military forays are treated with ridicule and the charge of heresy.

But perhaps heresy is exactly what we now need to jolt ourselves out of the stale patterns of thought that have delivered diplomatic debacles and political stalemates across the globe. Putin's invasion should be the spur to rethink our grand strategies (to make them truly grand) and redesign our statecraft (to evince workable solutions).

Our collective failure of imagination is on full display everywhere from our atavistic adversarial treatment of China to the recent Summit of Americas where discordant views were expelled in hopes that isolation would silence blasphemy. However, history reveals that shunning foes won't vanquish their views, and rebuffing apostates fosters only more apostasy.

Pundits and politicians remain stuck in the anachronistic mindset of Newtonian physics. If geopolitical theater were only that simple. A pivot from a mechanistic, billiard-ball metaphor of geopolitics to a quantum perspective on competition and cooperation, in which foes can be friends and adversaries can act as allies, offers a freshness that today's circumstances demand. Replacing the mechanistic "either/or" democracy versus autocracy framing with the quantum "both/and" expands the range of possibilities significantly.

However, the orthodoxy of our foreign policy swivels narrowly between liberal internationalism's multilateral approaches and the realist's realpolitik devoted to bilateralism based on military might rationalized by divinely ordained U.S. global leadership. The world is not responding.

For all our talk about "innovation," we do very little of it, at least when it comes to our policy stratagems or our epistemological models. We remain mired in convention tragically oblivious to the turbulence enveloping us. As Aristotle wrote so long ago, "It is … not easy to alter by argument what has long been absorbed by habit." Especially habit that bestows so much power to the selected few.

Geopolitically, we find ourselves in what may be referred to as a "liminal moment"—a transitional stage in which we struggle to loosen the bonds of past realities while groping for the norms of a new world order. This rite of passage is disorienting, rife with confusion. But experience, from the spiritual to the secular, tells us that transitory disorientation is necessary for development. Just as pressure births the diamond, geopolitical abrasions can unearth precious strategic visions. Yet, the tyranny of orthodoxy marching behind the banner of U.S. exceptionalism refuses to countenance any challenge—any confusion—to its cognitive, political and economic standing.

The first step is to realize that new solutions will only follow new modes of thinking. Einstein famously said, "We cannot solve our problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them." Yet, we persist in trying. What passes as "strategic thinking" today suffers from a deficiency of curiosity and an excess of hubris. A new mode of thinking hinges on creating ways of reconciling our prejudices and presumptions with the prejudices and presumptions of others, moving beyond the either/or straitjacket of today's thinking.

What is true for foreign policy is true for domestic policy and the tempestuous state of our civic discourse. True leadership, authentic exceptionalism, seeks reconciliation while accepting that differences will endure, conflict is endemic and long-lasting consensus possibly chimerical.

Let us not squander Putin's gift but rather accept the paradoxical nature of the times and seize this opportunity to think and act anew.

EPA

From Page 8

a crisis that soon may have no viable options.

The previous rulings on abortion and guns will have terrible consequences for many Americans. But this latest ruling carries implications for the entire world. Not only should the U.S. be leading on energy reforms; it has a special obligation to do so. Kagan noted that the U.S. is the world's second-largest annual emitter of greenhouse gases and is responsible for a more significant portion of historical emissions than any other nation.

Instead, Kagan wrote, the court "appoints itself—instead of Congress or the expert agency—the decisionmaker on climate policy. I cannot think of many things more frightening."

Officials at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency have said that the state will continue to make climate change a priority. But here, too, the Legislature is hampered by deep ideological divisions. This is not a crisis that any one state can tackle, nor even a single nation. It will take a concerted global effort, but it almost certainly cannot be done if the wealthiest country in the world is crippled in its ability to move forward.

Minnesota Sen. Tina Smith noted in a statement that a conservative majority court 15 years ago ruled correctly that the Clean Air Act could be the basis for regulating greenhouse gas emissions. That decision, she said, was reaffirmed in a unanimous 2011 opinion. The case, American Electric Power Co. v. Connecticut, stated that the Clean Air Act authorized the EPA to regulate carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases as air pollutants.

Once again, this court has disregarded years of precedent, as it did in Roe. This time the reasoning rests on the fragile fulcrum of what the court alone determines to be plausible or significant. The ruling is a setback in ways we may not yet be able to comprehend.

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MONSTERS

From Page 8

received abortions.

They reported higher levels of chronic pain for five years, and more gestational hypertension in subsequent pregnancies and were more likely than women who had abortions to say their health was poor or fair versus good or very good.

"What we're talking about here in the context of overturning Roe v. Wade is really forcing parenthood on a young person," Ralph said. "Removing autonomy from a young person in their decisions around pregnancy, from my perspective, is unethical. We know it will have negative health and socioeconomic impacts in both the short and the long term."

How do we wake up from this nightmare?

There is only one way.

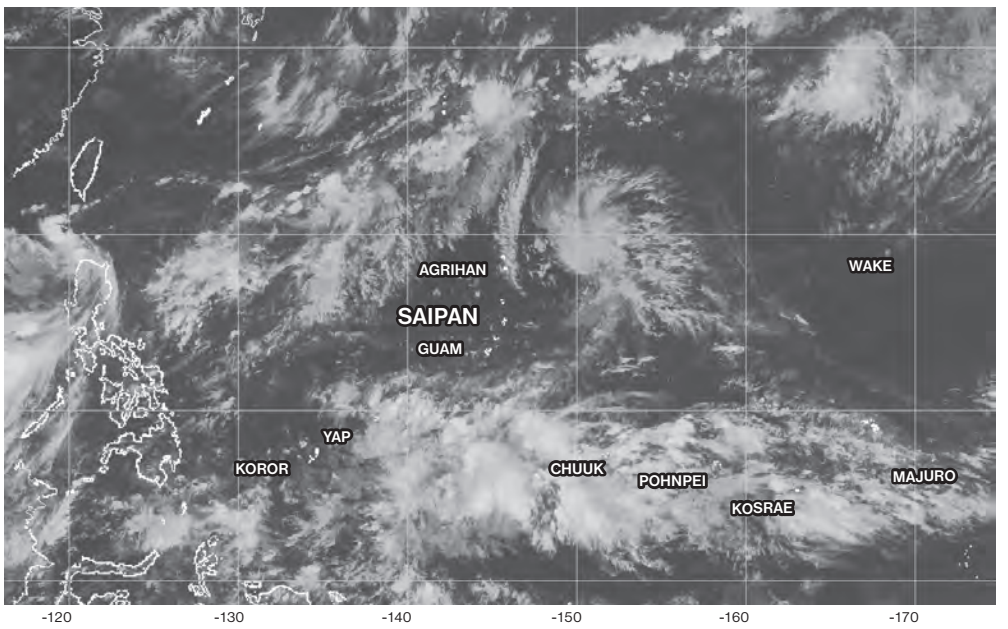
"For God's sake," Biden said Friday, "there's an election in November. Vote, vote, vote, vote."

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Scattered showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy.	Scattered showers and thunderstorms. Partly sunny.	Mostly sunny.	Mostly sunny.	A chance of showers. Partly sunny.
87° 76°	89° 77°	89° 76°	89° 76°	89° 78°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 9:28 AM, WEDNESDAY, JULY 13, 2022

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite shows an upper-level low near 19N149E, with a TUTT running just east of the islands. The main body of convection is southeast of the low, so it will enter the Marianas tonight. The buoys reveal combined seas of 4 to 6 feet, composed mainly of east swell and southeast wind waves.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

■ Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.

■ Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.

■ Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.

■ Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.

■ Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.

■ Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html

■ Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

■ Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.

■ Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

■ Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:

• Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.

• Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

• Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

• Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

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MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Palau	Partly Cloudy	84° / 77°
Yap	Partly Cloudy	87° / 78°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	88° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	87° / 77°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	87° / 77°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:54 AM	6:51 PM
Friday	5:54 AM	6:51 PM
Saturday	5:54 AM	6:51 PM
Sunday	5:55 AM	6:51 PM
Monday	5:55 AM	6:50 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	5:58 AM	7:34 PM
Friday	-	7:06 AM	8:30 PM
Saturday	-	8:12 AM	9:20 PM
Sunday	-	9:13 AM	10:04 PM
Monday	-	10:09 AM	10:44 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Rain	61° / 54°
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	84° / 70°
Hong Kong	Thunderstorms	90° / 82°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	87° / 75°
London	Partly Cloudy	72° / 61°
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	75° / 62°
Manila	Thunderstorms	91° / 81°
Melbourne	Showers	57° / 45°
Miami	Thunderstorms	88° / 82°
New York	Mostly Sunny	90° / 70°
Osaka	Thunderstorms	91° / 79°
Paris	Mostly Sunny	79° / 64°
Busan	Showers	84° / 77°
Rome	Mostly Sunny	97° / 72°
Salem	Thunderstorms	91° / 75°
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	66° / 56°
Seoul	Thunderstorms	82° / 72°
Tokyo	Cloudy	81° / 72°
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	89° / 74°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY	FEET	
1:48 AM	Low Tide	1.54
6:38 AM	High Tide	2.27
2:14 PM	Low Tide	-0.54
9:30 PM	High Tide	2.19

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JULY 1, 2022

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:50AM	10:30AM	Daily
UA156	6:30PM	7:15PM	6

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	6:00AM	8:00AM	Daily
UA193	7:05PM	10:55PM	5 via Palau
UA183	7:10PM	9:10PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	5 via Guam, Palau

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW9308	3:30PM	7:20PM	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3405	3:30PM	7:25PM	4, 6
RS112	3:45PM	7:30PM	3, 6 up to July 2 only
7C3405	3:50PM	7:45PM	3, 7
OZ624	4:00PM	7:40PM	3, 6

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

BX621	3:10PM	6:30PM	3, 7

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:45AM	Daily
UA112	4:40PM	5:30PM	6

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

PR110	10:00PM	4:00AM+1	Daily
UA184	10:25PM	4:25AM+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:25PM	6:15AM+1	5 via Palau
UA184	11:50PM	5:40AM+1	5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	1,2,3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
UA192/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	5 via Palau, Guam
UA184/174	11:50PM	8:45AM+1	5 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3406	8:30AM	2:10PM	4, 6, 7
RS111	8:45AM	2:05PM	3, 6 up to July 2 only
7C3406	8:50AM	2:30PM	3
TW9307	9:00AM	2:30PM	4, 6, 7
OZ623	9:00AM	2:30PM	3, 6
TW9307	9:15AM	2:30PM	3

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

BX621	8:00AM	1:10PM	3, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	SAIPAN	ROTA	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	SAIPAN	ROTA	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	SAIPAN	ROTA	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
1303	SAIPAN	ROTA	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	ROTA	SAIPAN	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	ROTA	SAIPAN	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
3102	ROTA	SAIPAN	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	ROTA	SAIPAN	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	ROTA	GUAM	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	GUAM	ROTA	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	SAIPAN	TINIAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	SAIPAN	TINIAN	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	SAIPAN	TINIAN	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	SAIPAN	TINIAN	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	SAIPAN	TINIAN	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	SAIPAN	TINIAN	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	SAIPAN	TINIAN	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	TINIAN	SAIPAN	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	TINIAN	SAIPAN	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	TINIAN	SAIPAN	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	TINIAN	SAIPAN	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	TINIAN	SAIPAN	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	TINIAN	SAIPAN	17:30	17:45	Daily

CNMI Democratic Party hosts Blue Banquet

Democrats from across the Northern Mariana Islands gathered last Saturday, July 2, 2022, at Pacific Islands Club Saipan for the party's first Blue Banquet, which is the party's signature event. NMI Democrats celebrated in style while honoring its leaders, reflecting on its past, and looking toward its future.

Democratic Party chair Jonathan P. Cabrera welcomed the revelers and reminded them that voting blue in November meant that they would be voting for Democratic integrity, solutions, transparency, and accountability.

"In the Northern Marianas and across the nation, Democrats are committed to uniting and healing our communities, to rebuilding an economy that promotes shared prosperity, and to restoring public trust in government," said Cabrera.

At the event, party officers recognized members of the Central Executive Committee, recognized those who ran with the party in 2020, and honored those elected to office with a special plaque of appreciation for the work they do every day for the people of the CNMI. The highlight of the evening was the recognition of former governor Dr. Carlos Sablan Camacho (represented at the event by his wife, Lourdes P. Camacho), Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan, and Efrain F. Camacho. The party thanked them for their leadership, integrity, and commitment to the ideals of the Democratic Party.

Ken Martin, chairman of the Minnesota Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party, president of the Association of State Democratic Committees, and a vice chair of the Democratic National Committee, shared a special message with NMI Democrats via video. "State parties are so critical because we are the institution that remains after every election. We do the critical work of building the infrastructure for the future. We're focused on building our party to win in this upcoming election but also to last," he said. He encouraged CNMI Democrats to "get out there and organize and energize, and let's make sure we win and do great things for people."

When Rep. Celina Roberto Babauta accepted her plaque, she thanked those gathered for electing women to the House of Representatives from every precinct on Saipan. Rep. Christina Marie E. Sablan, for her part, reminded those gathered that the problems our community faces are not insurmountable, that working together, we can make the Northern Mariana Islands a place where all can prosper, where all can thrive.

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan thanked the party for the special recognition and was quick to remind everyone to vote for his Democratic colleagues up and down the ballot.

In a little over a hundred days, voters will head to the polls, and the Democratic Party trusts that people will "Vote Blue" in 2022. When they vote blue in November, they will be voting against Republican corruption and voting for Democratic integrity. They will be voting against Republican intransigence and voting for Democratic solutions. They will be voting against Republican obstruction and voting for Democratic transparency. They will be voting against Republican excuses and voting for Democratic accountability.

If you are interested in running for office under the Democratic Party, visit www.nmidems.org, call (670) 234–5028/484–3367 (DEMS), or send an email to info@nmidems.org or chairjc@nmidems.org. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CNMI Democratic Party executive director Nola Hlx poses with Carmen Pangelinan and Florence Sablan last Saturday, July 2, 2022, at Pacific Islands Club Saipan for the party's Blue Banquet.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Juanita C. Deleon Guerrero and Anicia C. Dela Cruz accept a plaque of recognition on behalf of their cousin, Efrain F. Camacho, during the CNMI Democratic Party's Blue Banquet at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan last Saturday, July 2, 2022.

From left, CNMI Democratic Party chair Jonathan Cabrera, treasurer Shawna Indalecio, banquet guest Ronna Eriich, secretary Melia Johnson, and vice chair Luella Marciano pose for a picture last Saturday, July 2, 2022, at Pacific Islands Club Saipan for the party's Blue Banquet. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Banquet guests Anthony and Regina Duenas pose for a picture during the CNMI Democratic Party's Blue Banquet at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan last Saturday, July 2, 2022. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Daisy M. Propst and Lino Olopai pose for a picture during the CNMI Democratic Party's Blue Banquet at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan last Saturday, July 2, 2022. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Tina and Leila stand with veterans

There are few issues more important to Democratic gubernatorial candidate Reps. Christina "Tina" Sablan and running mate Leila Fleming Staffler than making sure that Commonwealth policies and programs are in place to support Marianas veterans and their families.

Sablan

Sablan and Staffler hosted a dinner meeting with veterans last week, July 7, 2022 and also accepted written comments and reflections from veterans who were not able to attend the session in person. The candidates thanked all the veterans who took the time to share their stories. Many of the concerns shared with Sablan and Staffler had to do with the challenges veterans experience in accessing the care and benefits they have earned, and their desire to see more support for veterans and military families when they come home.

"Leila and I want veterans and their families to know that in the Marianas, we honor and appreciate their service and sacrifices. And we will show our gratitude by making sure they have the resources they need to successfully transition to civilian life and thrive in our community," Sablan said.

Sablan and Staffler have a plan to improve support for veterans and their families in the Marianas. Their platform includes the following:

■ Building up the CNMI Office of Veterans Affairs to become a more robust resource center for vets and their families. Trained staff will provide information, referrals, and guidance to connect veterans and their families to federal, local, and nonprofit resources to aid their transition from military service to civilian life. An interactive, easy-to-use, and locally-based online portal will be created that Marianas service members, veterans, military families and service providers can use to search for and quickly access a range of resources for crisis intervention, healthcare, housing, education, employment, and other support services.

■ Veterans Employment Incentives. Sablan and Staffler will work with the Office of Personnel Management and the human resources departments of other branches and autonomous agencies to establish veterans' preference in CNMI government employment for veterans who served on active duty in the U.S. armed forces and were honorably discharged. Sablan and Staffler will also support incentives for private sector employers to hire veterans and count their skills and experience gained in military service when considering pay and positions.

Staffler

■ 'Thank You, Veterans' Initiative. Sablan and Staffler will establish a program of discounts or waivers for veterans on a range of government fees, such as business licensing, home construction, education and training, hunting, and fishing. They will also encourage local businesses to offer veterans discounts on goods and services. A "Thank You, Veterans" directory will be published online.

■ Preserving the stories of Marianas veterans. Sablan and Staffler recognize that the service and sacrifices of Marianas citizens in the U.S. armed forces are an important part of our collective history, and important to document for present and future generations. They will work with the CNMI Office of Veterans Affairs, the Office of the NMI Delegate to U.S. Congress, and other community partners and volunteers to collect the stories of service of Marianas veterans for the Veterans History Project of the Library of Congress, and for our own archive here in the Marianas.

"In the Marianas, we understand the price of freedom," Staffler said. "These islands will forever be hallowed grounds because of the blood that was shed here during the battles of World War II. We also keep in our hearts our brothers and sisters who have given their lives in defense of our nation since then, and those who have bravely served and continue to serve in the armed forces.

"It is so important to Tina and me to make sure that we do everything we can to show our love and support for our vets and their families when they come home," she added.

For more information about Sablan and Staffler's plans for veterans, or to request a meeting with them, email outreach@sablanstaffler.com, call 670-484-DEMS. To view Sablan and Staffler's platform and learn more about the campaign, visit www.sablanstaffler.com. ***(PR)***

Business

Twitter sues to force Musk to complete his $44B acquisition

Twitter sued Tesla CEO Elon Musk on Tuesday, trying to force him to complete his $44 billion takeover of the social media company by accusing him of "outlandish" and "bad faith" actions that have caused the platform irreparable harm and "wreaked havoc" on its stock price.

Back in April, Musk pledged to pay $54.20 a share for Twitter, which agreed to those terms after reversing its initial opposition to the deal. But the two sides have been bracing for a legal fight since the billionaire said Friday that he was backing away from his agreement to buy the company.

Twitter's lawsuit opens with a sharply-worded accusation: "Musk refuses to honor his obligations to Twitter and its stockholders because the deal he signed no longer serves his personal interests."

"Having mounted a public spectacle to put Twitter in play, and having proposed and then signed a seller-friendly merger agreement, Musk apparently believes that he — unlike every other party subject to Delaware contract law —is free to change his mind, trash the company, disrupt its operations, destroy stockholder value, and walk away," the suit stated.

Twitter filed its lawsuit in the Delaware Court of Chancery, which frequently handles business disputes among the many corporations, including Twitter, that are incorporated there.

As part of the April deal, Musk and Twitter had agreed to pay each other a $1 billion breakup fee if either was responsible for the deal falling through. The company could have pushed Musk to pay the hefty fee but is going farther than that, trying to force him to complete the full $44 billion purchase approved by the company's board.

"Oh the irony lol," Musk tweeted after Twitter filed the lawsuit, without explanation.

The arguments and evidence laid out by Twitter are compelling and likely to get a receptive ear in the Delaware court, which doesn't look kindly on sophisticated buyers with highly-paid legal advisers backing off of deals, said Brian Quinn, a law professor at Boston College.

"They make a very strong argument that this is just buyer's remorse," Quinn said. "You have to eat your mistakes in the Delaware Chancery Court. That's going to work very favorably for Twitter."

Musk alleged Friday that Twitter has failed to provide enough information about the number of fake accounts on its service. Twitter said last month that it was making available to Musk a "fire hose" of raw data on hundreds of millions of daily tweets.

Starbucks closing 16 US stores for safety issues

Starbucks is closing 16 stores around the country because of repeated safety issues, including drug use and other disruptive behaviors that threaten staff.

The coffee giant is closing six stores in its hometown of Seattle, six in Los Angeles, two in Portland, Oregon and one each in Philadelphia and Washington. Starbucks said employees at those stores will be given the opportunity to transfer to other stores.

Starbucks said Tuesday the closures are part of a larger effort to respond to staff concerns and make sure stores are safe and welcoming. In a letter to employees, Starbucks' senior vice presidents of operations Debbie Stroud and Denise Nelson said the company's stores aren't immune from problems like rising drug use and a growing mental health crisis.

"We know these challenges can, at times, play out within our stores too. We read every incident report you file—it's a lot," Stroud and Nelson wrote.

But the company also faced criticism from some workers who said they weren't consulted or given any options besides closure.

"We think it is not fair that we were not allowed to be a part of this decision about our working conditions, nor for Starbucks to claim they could not provide a safe experience for our workplace," said Mari Cosgrove, an employee at one of the Seattle stores that is closing.

The closures took on heightened significance because of an ongoing unionization effort at Starbucks' U.S. stores. More than 189 U.S. Starbucks stores have voted to unionize since late last year, according to the National Labor Relations Board. Starbucks opposes the unionization effort.

Two of the Seattle stores that are closing have voted to unionize, while one of the Portland stores has petitioned to hold a union vote. Last month, Starbucks also closed a unionized store in Ithaca, New York, because of operational problems, including an overflowing grease trap.

Surging gas prices likely drove US inflation to 40-year high

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. inflation likely reached a new 40-year high in June, driven up by a spike in gas costs, more expensive food and rent, and pricier cars and hotel rooms.

A government report Wednesday is expected to show that consumer prices soared 8.8% in June compared with a year earlier, according to data provide FactSet. That would be an increase from 8.6% in May and the biggest yearly rise since December 1981.

Inflation at that level would make it highly likely the Federal Reserve will implement another large interest rate increase at its next meeting in two weeks. Higher rates are intended to cool consumer and business spending and slow the economy and inflation.

Such large price increases would also highlight the brutal impact that inflation has had on many families' finances, as the costs of many necessities has soared at a faster pace than incomes. Lower-income Americans and Black and Hispanic families have fared worse, as a greater percentage of their budgets are spent on items like gas and food.

So far in July, however, gas prices have fallen from the eye-watering $5 a gallon reached in mid-June to an average of $4.66 nationwide as of Tuesday. That is still far higher than a year ago, but the drop points to the potential for sharply lower inflation this month and possibly in August.

Still, rising prices have caused a steep decline in consumers' confidence in the economy, dragged down President Joe Biden's approval ratings and present major political risks for congressional Democrats this fall. Forty percent of U.S. adults said tackling inflation should be a top government priority this year in a June AP-NORC poll, up from just 14% in December.

Nation

Uvalde's new anguish: Video shows police waiting in school

Exclusive Uvalde video shows school shooting, police in hallway after shooter entered classroom
Real Time: 12:50:12:15
EXIT
POLICE

UVALDE CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT/AUSTIN AMERICAN-STATESMAN VIA AP

In this photo from surveillance video provided by the Uvalde Consolidated Independent School District via the Austin American-Statesman, authorities respond to the shooting at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas, Tuesday, May 24, 2022.

UVALDE, Texas (AP) — A new wave of anger swept through Uvalde on Tuesday over surveillance footage of police officers in body armor milling in the hallway of Robb Elementary School while a gunman carried out a massacre inside a fourth-grade classroom where 19 children and two teachers were killed.

The video published Tuesday by the Austin American-Statesman is a disturbing 80-minute recording of what has been known for weeks now about one of the deadliest school shootings in U.S. history: that heavily armed police officers, some armed with rifles and bulletproof shields, massed in the hallway and waited more than an hour before going inside and stopping the May 24 slayings.

But the footage, which until now had not surfaced publicly, anguished Uvalde residents anew and redoubled calls in the small South Texas city for accountability and explanations that have been incomplete—and sometimes inaccurate—in the seven weeks since the shooting. Hours after the video was published, some residents at a Uvalde City Council meeting said they had not been able to bring themselves to watch it.

Jesus Rizo said officers who are paid taxpayer dollars to protect people should not have "sat there" when children were in danger.

"You could've saved some lives. You could have held somebody's hand as they were dying," he said. "The parents could have seen them one last time as they were dying."

Others demanded consequences for police and more information in an investigation marked by confusing statements that have had to be retracted at times.

"Give these families some closure," said Daniel Myers, a pastor in Uvalde and family friend to one of the victims.

An investigative committee led by Texas lawmakers had earlier announced plans to show the video to Uvalde residents for the first time Sunday, in addition to sharing their findings after weeks of closed-door testimony from more than 40 witnesses.

"This has been the most unprofessional investigation or handling of it that I've ever seen in my life," Uvalde Mayor Don McLaughlin said in an interview with The Associated Press. "These families get blindsided constantly."

The footage from a hallway camera inside the school shows the gunman entering the building with an AR-15 style rifle and includes 911 tape of a teacher screaming, "Get down! Get in your rooms! Get in your rooms!"

Penalty cut for baker who refused to serve couple

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) —The state of Oregon has slashed the financial penalties it assigned a baker who refused to bake a wedding cake for a lesbian couple almost 10 years ago.

In compliance with a state appeals court ruling earlier this year, State Labor Commissioner Val Hoyle said Tuesday that the Bureau of Labor and Industries is ordering Aaron Klein to pay $30,000 damages instead of a $135,000 fine issued in 2015, Oregon Public Broadcasting reported.

Laurel and Rachel Bowman-Cryer filed a complaint against Sweet Cakes by Melissa owners Melissa and Aaron Klein in 2013, saying the bakery refused to bake them a wedding cake.

The Oregon Court of Appeals twice upheld a ruling by the state civil rights division that found that an Oregon bakery illegally discriminated against the couple.

The court in January found the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries did not exhibit religious neutrality in issuing the fine and returned the case to the civil rights division to reassess it.

The damages were scrapped in 2018, when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of a Colorado baker who had also been fined for refusing service to a same-sex couple on religious grounds. Justices there found Colorado's penalty had shown bias against the baker's religion. They ordered the Oregon Court of Appeals to take a fresh look at the Sweet Cakes case.

Applying the new standards set by the Supreme Court, Oregon appellate judges found reason to believe the steep penalty demonstrated bias. While the court found the state had a right to penalize Klein for illegal discrimination, it also concluded that the agency had "at least subtly" strayed from its legal requirement to be neutral in regard to his religion.

Asia

Sri Lankan president flees the country amid economic crisis

AP

Protesters dance shouting slogans against president Gotabaya Rajapaksa outside his office in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Wednesday, July 13, 2022.

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)—The president of Sri Lanka fled the country early Wednesday, slipping away in the middle of the night only hours before he was to step down amid a devastating economic crisis that has triggered severe shortages of food and fuel.

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, his wife and two bodyguards left aboard a Sri Lankan Air Force plane bound for the city of Male, the capital of the Maldives, according to an immigration official who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the situation.

Rajapaksa had agreed to resign under pressure. Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe said he would leave once a new government was in place.

The president's departure followed months of demonstrations that culminated Saturday in protesters storming his home and office and the official residence of his prime minister. The protests have all but dismantled his family's political dynasty, which ruled Sri Lanka for most of the past two decades.

On Wednesday morning, Sri Lankans continued to stream into the presidential palace. A growing line of people waited to enter the residence, many of whom had traveled from outside Colombo on public transport.

"What Rajapaksa did—flee the country—is a timid act," said Bhasura Wickremesinghe, a 24-year-old student of maritime electrical engineering, who came with friends. "I'm not celebrating. There's no point celebrating. We have nothing in this country at the moment."

He complained that Sri Lankan politics have been dominated for years by "old politicians" who all need to go. "Politics needs to be treated like a job—you need to have qualifications that get you hired, not because of what your last name is," he said, referring to the Rajapaksa family.

There was no end to the crisis in sight, and protesters vowed to occupy the official buildings until the top leaders are gone. For days, people have flocked to the presidential palace almost as if it were a tourist attraction—swimming in the pool, marveling at the paintings and lounging on the beds piled high with pillows. At one point, they also burned the prime minister's private home.

S. Korea expands booster shots as COVID-19 cases rise

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Health officials in South Korea are expanding booster shots to adults 50 and over as COVID-19 cases creep up again across the country.

The 40,226 new cases reported Wednesday marked the country's highest daily jump in more than two months, although hospitalizations and deaths remain stable.

Baek Gyeongran, South Korea's top infectious disease expert, attributed the rising case counts to people's waning immunities following vaccinations and prior infections and a major removal of social distancing measures since April as the nation wiggled out of an omicron surge. Health workers are also witnessing a "rapid spread" of BA.5, which is seen as the most transmissible variant of omicron yet, Baek said.

South Korea had previously given second booster shots to people who are 60 or older and those with compromised immune systems. Officials are now expanding the eligibility of those shots to people who are 50 or older and all adults with pre-existing medical conditions. Weeklong quarantines will be maintained for people who test positive.

Officials say the country may see daily case counts of 200,000 by mid-August or September if infections continue to grow. However, they don't have immediate plans to meaningfully elevate social distancing restrictions, which have been effectively stripped down to an indoor mask mandate over the past months.

Baek, the commissioner of the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency, said the government will focus on expanding booster shots and securing larger supplies of antiviral pills to suppress hospitalizations and deaths. She said a return to stringent social distancing will be considered as a last resort, considering the weak economy, but pleaded for people to cancel unnecessary meetings and travel.

"The need to reduce the social and economic damage from social distancing is greater than ever, and we are also considering the economic situation, including inflation and high interest rates," Baek said. "We also know that people are in a state of accumulated fatigue following lengthy periods of high-level distancing."

World

WORLD BRIEFS

Ukraine reports striking Russian ammunition depot in south

KYIV, Ukraine (AP)—The Ukrainian military on Tuesday reported destroying a Russian ammunition depot in southern Ukraine, resulting in a massive explosion captured on social media, while rescuers said the death toll from a weekend Russian strike in the country's east grew to 45.An overnight rocket strike targeted the depot in Russian-held Nova Kakhovka, the Ukrainian military's southern command said. Nova Kakhovka is about 55 kilometers (35 miles) east of the Black Sea port city of Kherson, which is also occupied by Russian forces.The precision of the strike suggested Ukrainian forces used U.S.-supplied multiple-launch High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems, or HIMARS.

Dozens dead, injured in Haiti's capital in gang clashes

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—Dozens of people have died in four days of gang battles in a violent neighborhood of Haiti's capital, the latest eruption of bloodshed in a wave of increasing violence sweeping the country, local officials said Tuesday. Jean Hislain Frederick, deputy mayor in Cite Soleil district of Port-au-Prince, said that the fighting erupted Friday in a clash between members of two rival gangs and that at least 50 people had died and more than 50 were wounded. The violence began just a day after the first anniversary of the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse.

In Celebration of His new Life

†Juan Reyes Castro

Born to Life: November 15, 1950
Called to eternal Life: July 8, 2022

In his new life, he now joins his:

Parents: †Jose Cabrera Castro
†Ana Camacho Reyes
Grandmother: †Isabel Lujan Reyes
Father-in-law: †Napoleon L. Poblete
Brothers: †Ambrosio Camacho Reyes
†Daniel Camacho Reyes
†Vicente Camacho Reyes
†Francisco Camacho Reyes
†Jose Reyes San Miguel

His memories will always live in the hearts of his:

Wife: Marie Ann Poblete Castro
Daughter: Trisha Dianne P. Castro
Mother-in-Law: Virginia C. Poblete
Brother-in-Law: Perfecto C. Poblete
Sister-in-Law & Family: Ma. Theresa P. Camacho & Children
Monette C. Poblete & Children
Amorleen Atalig Poblete & Family

He will also be missed by his numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, nephews, nieces, relatives, and friends.
Funeral Services will be held on Saturday, July 16, 2022.
His remains will be escorted from CHC Morgue at 7:30 am toKristo Rai Church. Responso Service and Holy Rosary will take place upon arrival of the remain.

Mass of the Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10:00 am followed by Interment Service at Mount Carmel Cemetery where he will be laid to a peaceful rest.
Please join us in prayers.

Thank you and Si Yu'us Ma'ase.
Marie Ann Poblete Castro, daughter,
Trisha, the Reyes, Castro and Mendiola family.

Environment

Deforestation in Brazilian Amazon hits tragic record in 2022

AP
Cattle graze on land recently burned and deforested by cattle farmers near Novo Progresso, Para state, Brazil, on Aug. 23, 2020.

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP)—Deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon during the first half of 2022 broke all records, a measure of the increasing destruction taking place under the presidency of Jair Bolsonaro.

Satellite images taken between January and June show 4,000 square kilometers (1,500 square miles) of forest destroyed, more than in any six month period in the seven years of record-keeping under the current methodology. The extent is four times the size of New York City.

What makes the statistic more remarkable is that the forest cutting is taking place during the rainy season. Deforestation is historically higher in the drier second half of the year when it is easier to access remote areas on the region's unpaved roads.

Brazil also will hold presidential elections in October, which typically reduces law enforcement in the Amazon. Bolsonaro will run for a second 4-year term. Currently he is trailing former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva in polls.

The area destroyed in the first half of 2022 is 80% larger than the same period in 2018, the year before Bolsonaro took office, according to an analysis from the Amazon Environmental Research Institute, or IPAM, a Brazilian nonprofit.

Around half of the felling occurred on public lands, according to the IPAM analysis. The pattern in Brazil is that criminals seize public land expecting that the areas will be legalized for agriculture or cattle-raising in the future.

Other illegal real estate and timber transactions plus lack of enforcement contribute to the increasing deforestation rates, according to Ane Alencar, IPAM's science director.

"Those who control the Amazon don't want it preserved," Alencar told the Associated Press in a phone interview. "The standing forest has no value in today's Amazon."

The most rapacious cutting took place in Amazonas state, overtaking both Para and Mato Grosso, which historically register more tree loss. That is a worrisome trend, as Amazonas is deep in the rainforest and has remained pristine relative to other Amazon regions.

Africa looks to private sector to fund ocean climate action

Vendors and fish mongers arrive on an incoming fishing boat at the Gazi Bay with their overnight catch in Kwale county, Kenya on Sunday, June 12, 2022. AP

MOMBASA, Kenya (AP)—Countries on Africa's west coast are increasingly turning to climate funding initiatives to boost livelihoods of oceanside communities, aid biodiversity and take climate action.

On the margins of the high-level political forum on sustainable development currently underway at the United Nations headquarters in New York, African coastal and island states and conservation groups outlined plans to boost ocean conservation and economic development through a system of " blue bonds"—a method of financing projects that would also benefit ocean health.

Following on from Africa's Great Green Wall, which spans across the continent's Sahel region, east African nations are now seeking funds for the Great Blue Wall initiative, which aims to protect marine areas across the coastline. Both blue and green finance refers to funding aimed at preventing environmental damage and combating climate change while creating sustainable ecosystems.

"The blue bond is a powerful example of the critical role that the capital markets can play in supporting sustainable objectives," said Jorge Familiar, Vice President of the World Bank.

The Great Blue Wall initiative, launched last year by ten western Indian Ocean states during the U.N.'s climate conference in Glasgow, aims to create a network of coastal and marine protected areas which supporters say would restore and conserve some 2 million hectares of ocean, capture 100 million tons of carbon dioxide and secure livelihoods for over 70 million people.

The project spans the continent's west coast—from Somalia to South Africa—and includes the island states of Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles, Somalia and the French territories, Mayotte and Reunion.

Jean-Paul Adam, who heads the climate division at the U.N. Economic Commission for Africa, said the blue wall initiative would recognize "the true value the environment has in future wealth creation and empowerment of local communities".

"We need to dramatically upscale private sector investment into green and blue sectors," he said. Less than one percent of so-called blue and green bonds, which are used for marine and land projects respectively, are issued for African countries.

"The next steps are to make these markets more accessible to African countries," he added.

The U.N. says many of the financial climate promises made by richer countries are not being committed to in full, meaning that many African nations are unable to take necessary adaptation and mitigation measures against the effect of climate change.

In its latest assessment, the African Development Bank said that between $1.3 trillion and $1.6 trillion is needed by 2030 to implement climate action in line with nationally determined contributions—targets set by individual countries to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees F) and no more than 2C (3.6 F). But blue bonds are currently just a fraction of ocean conservation funding, the bank added.

"Bonds alone are not a panacea for the financing gap but they can allow us to raise large amounts," Adam said.

18-year oil spill in Gulf: 1M gallons collected since 2019

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—One million gallons of oil have been collected since April 2019 from the site of the nation's longest oil spill, in the Gulf of Mexico off Louisiana, the Coast Guard and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said Tuesday.

The spill began when when Hurricane Ivan caused an underwater mudslide in September 2004, collapsing an oil production platform 11 miles (27 kilometers) from shore. Owner Taylor Energy Co. LLC capped nine wells but said it couldn't cap the other 16 at Mississippi Canyon Block 20, or MC-20 for short. They have now been leaking for nearly 18 years.

"As of July 12, 2022, 1,016,929 gallons of oil have been collected from the MC-20 site" over more than three years, the Coast Guard said in a news release. That amount—more than 3.8 million liters—would fill about 1.5 Olympic swimming pools.

The Coast Guard said that the containment system it ordered is collecting an average of about 900 gallons (3,400 liters) of oil a day.

Neither agency estimated the 18-year total.

Some earlier estimates put the daily maximum at 33 times the current daily amount, but that figure is also far above early government estimates of 7.5 gallons (28 liters) a day in 2012 and 12 gallons (45 liters) a day in 2015.

Estimates were even lower from Taylor, which unsuccessfully took the Coast Guard and its contractor to court over the containment system.

The New Orleans-based company agreed in December 2021 to drop three lawsuits, turn over a $432 million cleanup trust fund and pay an additional $43 million to settle a federal lawsuit.

U.S. District Judge Greg Gerard Guidry signed the settlement in March, according to online court records.

The trust fund money went to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management to pay for continuing efforts to plug the well and stop the spill, NOAA said in its press release.

"Experts continue to work on a permanent solution," the agency said.

Life & Style

‘Succession’ tops Emmy nominations, ‘Squid Game’ also scores

LOS ANGELES (AP) — “Succession” received a leading 25 Emmy nominations Tuesday, but the satirical drama about the rich and ruthless has a landmark rival in “Squid Game,” the first non-English language series to vie for television’s top honor.

Netflix’s “Squid Game,” a South Korea-set drama in which the poor are fodder for brutal games, earned a best drama nomination and 13 other bids for September’s Emmy Awards. HBO’s “Succession” captured the best drama trophy and six other awards when it last vied for Emmys, in 2020.

Series creator Hwang Dong-hyuk said he appreciated that “Squid Game” was chosen as the “first milestone” for a Hollywood and U.S. change of attitude.

“Instead of just exporting the content around the world, it is now shifting to become a participant in the global content realm to facilitate exchanges of cultures around the world,” he told The Associated Press through a translator.

“Ted Lasso” was the top comedy series nominee with 20 bids and has the chance to earn its second consecutive best comedy trophy, as academy voters proved undeterred by its sophomore season turn to the emotional dark side.

Other top nominees included the tropical resort-set anthology dramedy “The White Lotus,” which also received 20 nominations; the comedies “Hacks” and “Only Murders in the Building” with 17 bids each, and teenage dysfunction drama “Euphoria.” Its star, Zendaya, was crowned best actress in 2020 and is nominated again.

Departing series that might have expected salutes were instead snubbed, including the beloved family drama “This Is Us,” which received one bid, for original music and lyrics. An equally beloved family comedy, “black-ish,” earned costume and hairstyling nominations. “Ozark,” which wrapped its run last season, fared better, with 13 bids including best drama series.

NETFLIX VIA AP

This image released by Netflix shows Lee Jung-jae, background center, in a scene from the popular Korean series “Squid Game.” Jung-jae was nominated for an Emmy Award for best lead actor in a drama series.

The final season for “Insecure” earned a lead comedy actress bid for its creator-star Issa Rae, while the return of “Atlanta” brought its creator and lead Donald Glover a shot at a best actor trophy to bookend his 2017 award.

The crowd-pleasing and acclaimed “ Abbott Elementary” made a splashy debut in its first year, earning seven nominations including a best comedy nod and a lead acting bid for its creator, Quinta Brunson. The recognition for the ABC show was a rare bright spot for broadcast networks, which were otherwise shut out of the comedy and drama series races.

The other nominees for best comedy series are “Barry”; “Curb Your Enthusiasm”; “Hacks”; “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel”; “Only Murders in the Building”; “Ted Lasso” and “What We Do in the Shadows.”

From ‘Lasso’ to Lizzo, Emmy nominees react with joy

LOS ANGELES (AP)— Nicholas Braun of “Succession” was pacing on the street around Soho in Manhattan, unable to stop moving and feeling “a little manic.” “Squid Game” creator Hwang Dong-hyuk was hunkering down at an island retreat to write season 2, but took a break for a bottle of Champagne. Jane Lynch was about to get sushi before performing on Broadway in a few hours. Connie Britton was getting her hair colored. They and many others expressed joy after being nominated for Emmys. Some reactions:

■■■■

“Oh my God, it’s the job of a lifetime, the people that I get to work with. You’re just around so much talent, and we’ve really got a family thing going. Just so many special actors who know their characters like the back of their hands. When I’m in a scene, I’m also a fan and I’m like, ‘Oh my God, they’re killing it right now!’ So it’s really the greatest gig, and I’m so happy for everybody else getting their props.” — Nicholas Braun of “Succession,” nominated for best supporting actor in a drama, one of a leading 25 nominations for the series.

■■■■

“I have already drunk a bottle of Champagne ... I am in a grueling process of writing Season 2. These nominations add to the pressure but as much as the pressure increases, I would say that my motivation also increases, because I want to deliver on the expectations.” — “Squid Game” creator Hwang Dong-hyuk, speaking from Jeju island in South Korea, where he is writing the next season, after his show became the first non-English language series to vie for television’s top honor. It earned a best drama nomination and 13 other bids.

■■■■

“We are a nauseatingly happy bunch! Because there is nobody, including Jason (Sudeikis), that thinks they’re more important in any scene than anyone else. And it has to come from him. He shines the light so universally away from himself. ... It’s really, really healthy and supportive. And honestly, if you could have seen our WhatsApp group over the last two hours, it honestly is nauseating. We dig each other, we dig each other to death. And I will struggle to leave this group of players. I really will.” — Hannah Waddingham on her “Ted Lasso” ensemble. Waddingham was nominated again for the award she won last year, best supporting actress in a comedy.

■■■■

“My family sacrificed a lot for me to pursue my dreams. There’s always that fear in the back of your mind: ‘Did they sacrifice and give up too much? Am I ever going to achieve this dream that everyone has for me and I have?’ This makes me feel like this and everything was worth it.” — Sydney Sweeney, nominated for best supporting actress in a drama series for “Euphoria.”

■■■■

“We came out of ‘Breaking Bad’ being a great show. It’s one of the best ever on TV. You always want to try to do right by that show — do right by your legacy. It feels like we’re continuing to fulfill the hope that people had for us to keep that level of excellence. I’m following (Bryan) Cranston and these great actors who set a really high water mark.” — Bob Odenkirk, nominated for best actor in a drama for “Better Call Saul.”

■■■■

“I like to find the humor in everything, and I feel like (in) the best drama, you have to kind of have the counterbalance of humor in order to really point out the drama. But it was so fun to kind of go at it from the opposite direction. ... For me, it was about, okay, I have to find the gravitas and I have to find the groundedness and the reality. It was really fun and wonderful to be able to do that with such a wonderful group of actors who were just all so excellent.” — Connie Britton of “The White Lotus,” nominated for best supporting actress, limited series or TV movie.

Husband’s dishonesty about finances imperils marriage

DEAR ABBY: I am married to a man from a different country, culture and religion. We have an amazing relationship, and he is my best friend. We do everything together—grocery shop, date nights, travel, etc. He is a wonderful husband. The only problem is he doesn’t contribute financially. I have told him time and again that this is going to be a big problem for us.

In his country, the people are poor, so he sends money to his family. His parents are wonderful, humble people and I love them dearly. He doesn’t earn as much as I do, but I do not feel that should stop him from making some financial contribution to OUR LIFE. He makes a decent salary and could buy some groceries or pay for a dinner here or there, but he doesn’t. I pay for everything -- cars, gas, living, groceries, coffee, phones, etc.

We had agreed that after he paid off his debts, he would put a certain amount of money in the savings, which would still leave him $1,000 for himself. A thousand dollars is half a year’s salary in his country. For the last three months he has made no contributions, and when I asked about it, he said he doesn’t know what he did with the money. He’s obviously lying.

I am so furious that I’m considering divorce. I have never told him not to help his family, and I have been very generous with them as well. But it worries me that he is only concerned with his family back home and not the well-being of the family we have built together.

MONEY’S THE ISSUE IN MISSISSIPPI

DEAR MONEY’S THE ISSUE: Your “wonderful” husband has reneged on his promise to put money in the savings account and lied to you about where the money is going. Could it have gone someplace other than to his parents? You have a right to know. Marriage is more than a romantic adventure. It is also a partnership—and one in which your husband isn’t contributing his agreed-upon share.

You may be able to resolve this with the help of a licensed mediator or counselor, but if it doesn’t solve the problem, talk to an attorney about protecting yourself financially.

■■■■

DEAR ABBY: I am a mother of two and grandmother of three. I have a few cousins I socialize with occasionally, but I can’t say I’m particularly close to any of them. I enjoy spending most of my time with my children, grandchildren and husband.

Recently, one of my cousins has been pestering me to have a family reunion. Every time we talk, he brings up the subject, as well as other family members we have lost touch with. I have told him and his wife repeatedly that I am not interested in hosting a family reunion, and quite frankly, wouldn’t be interested in attending one, either.

I don’t want to seem harsh, but I have little interest in reuniting with many of my cousins, and I find large family gatherings stressful. I feel like they are trying to bully me into hosting and/or attending something I have said time and again I’m not interested in. What should I do?

NAGGED IN NEW JERSEY

DEAR NAGGED: The next time he brings up the subject of your hosting a family reunion, laugh. Then tell him the folks who should do it are him and his wife because you are not interested. Then change the subject.

■■■■

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

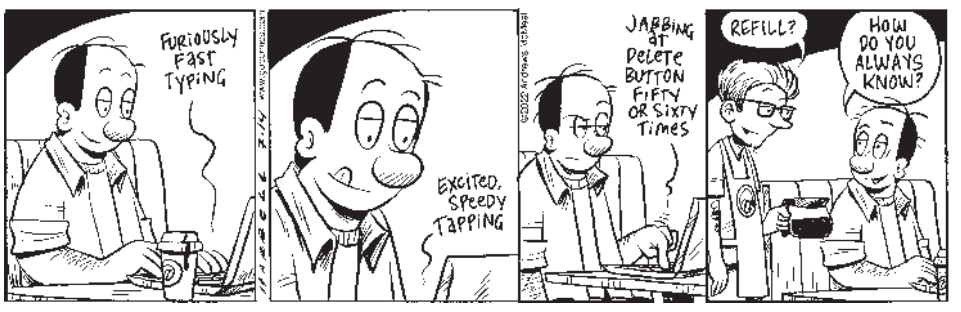
ONE OF THE JOYS OF BEING A KID IS THAT EXPERIENCES ARE NEW AND ARE THEREFORE MORE INTENSE.
FOR EXAMPLE I'M ABOUT TO STICK MY NOSE IN A JAR OF MUSTARD AND INHALE DEEPLY. LET'S SEE WHAT IT'S LIKE.
WHOOOP!!
SEE, WHEN YOU'RE OLDER, YOU TAKE YOUR SINUSES FOR GRANTED.
SOME OF US PREFER TO.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

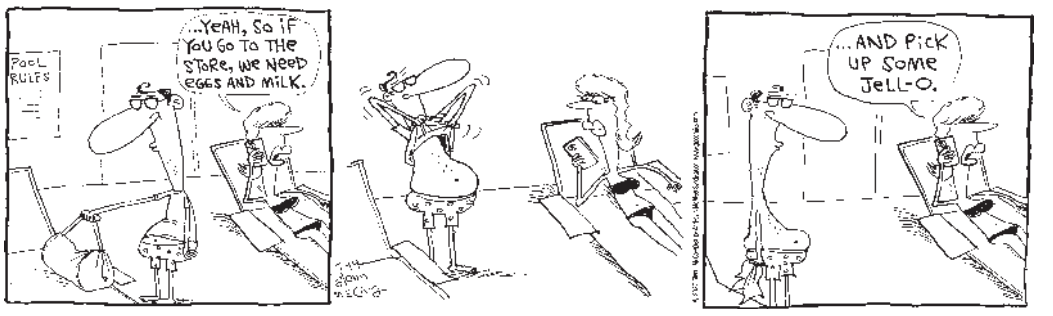
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


FURIOUSLY FAST TYPING
EXCITED, SPEEDY TAPPING
JABBING AT DELETE BUTTON FIFTY OR SIXTY TIMES
REFILL?
HOW DO YOU ALWAYS KNOW?

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

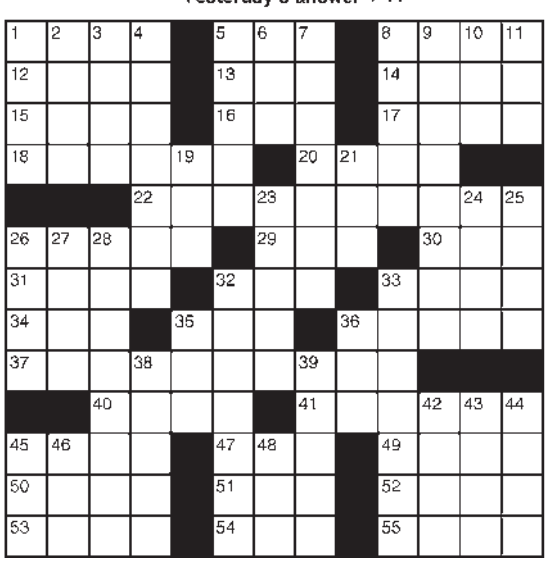
1 Persian leader
5 Kipling hero
8 Dull sound of impact
12 Earring site
13 Enzyme suffix
14 Bagel feature
15 River to the Baltic
16 Boom times
17 Director Preminger
18 Spanish explorer
20 Some babies
22 Contemplate anew
26 Vatican VIPs
29 Televise
30 Italian article
31 Jazzy Fitzgerald
32 Automaton, for short
33 Farmland unit
34 Oklahoma city
35 Weir
36 Grove units
37 Contemplate anew
40 Eyebrow shape
41 Excuses
45 Pocket bread
47 Passing craze
49 Aloe —
50 Scott Turow book
51 German conjunction
52 Black, in verse
53 Go by
54 Non-clerical
55 Lairs

DOWN

1 No neatnik
2 "Today" cohost Kotb
3 First victim
4 Chamomile product
5 Island of Hawaii
6 MSN, for one
7 Camper's dinnerware
8 Daring swimwear
9 Tabasco, for one
10 Last (Abbr.)
11 "Gloria in Excelsis —"
19 Surprised cries
21 Rowing need
23 Model Campbell
24 Concerning
25 Burnsian turndowns
26 Bartlett, for one
27 Shoppe descriptor
28 Mollifies
32 Timid
33 Showed up
35 Pol. party org.
36 Business card no.
38 Face-to-face exams
39 — Warbucks
42 Actress Neuwirth
43 Press
44 Without
45 Soda
46 Chef Garten
48 Santa — winds

Solution time: 24 mins.

Yesterday's answer 7-14



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Darby Camp, 15; Alisha Wainwright, 33; Matthew Fox, 56; Jane Lynch, 62.

Happy Birthday: Take the road less traveled and see where it leads. A change of scenery, interests or challenges will help you put your life in perspective. Having a solid plan in place will spark your imagination and take you on a journey geared toward personal growth. Forge ahead with a realistic attitude. Your numbers are 6, 18, 24, 28, 32, 41, 46.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Embrace a challenge with clarity, and you'll find a simple solution. A modest, moderate attitude will help alleviate interference from someone overbearing. Go about your business and stay ahead of the competition. Work toward self-improvement, not trying to change others. ✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Speak up and gain support. Incorporate change and improve your position. An open mind will lead to educational pursuits and finding ways to use your skills to reach your goals. Mix business with pleasure; you'll find common ground. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Explore the possibilities and strive for perfection. Trust in your ability, experience and knowledge to help you choose what's best for you. Refuse to let someone intervene and ruin plans. Personal growth is encouraged. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Impulsive spending and decisions will disrupt your day. Think before you choose to impact a partnership, your lifestyle and your future. Do what's best for you now so you can avoid regret later. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Don't get angry; get moving. You'll never retrieve time you've spent arguing. Give something your all by putting some muscle behind what you want to accomplish. Hard work and discipline will be rewarding and give you the boost and clarity you need. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Draw on your resources to make things come to fruition. Speak up, share information and take the initiative to make a difference. What you contribute will turn heads and encourage others to follow suit. Discipline is the key to your success. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Stay calm, be cool and put on a happy face. Opportunities will surface if your attitude is positive and your ideas are mindful and beneficial. You'll be the person everyone wants to be around once you share love and stifle angst. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Slow down, consider your options and tuck your emotions away someplace safe. Don't leave yourself open for criticism or abuse. Make decisions that are in your best interest once you get the facts. Trust your instincts and follow your intuition. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Address issues that don't feel right, and make changes that simplify your life. Stop worrying about what others do or think. Take responsibility for your happiness and eliminate regret. Personal growth leads to better relationships. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Make home, family and relationships your priorities. Work as a team player and get your house in order. Improving your surroundings will encourage you to spend more time building a sustainable base. Be open to suggestions. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* A little time to yourself will be revitalizing. Pick up the pace, get in shape and enrich your life with relationships that offer support and encouragement. Love and romance are on the rise and will enhance your life. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Make your home function better, but don't go over budget. Call on people who owe you or are willing to do something to help. Join a group that stimulates your mind and encourages you to do more and offer your best. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are resourceful, persistent and insightful. You are emotional and commanding.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

			6		8			
		3	7	9	5	2		
	4						6	
3	2						1	6
	5						9	
8	1						4	2
	7						3	
		4	9	1	7	8		
			2		4			

Difficulty Level ★★★ 7/14

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

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Last Tuesday's Answer

5	9	4	8	3	2	6	7	1
1	7	2	5	9	6	8	3	4
8	3	6	1	4	7	9	2	5
6	2	3	9	5	8	4	1	7
7	8	5	2	1	4	3	9	6
9	4	1	6	7	3	2	5	8
3	5	7	4	8	9	1	6	2
4	6	9	7	2	1	5	8	3
2	1	8	3	6	5	7	4	9

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

SEEN IN THE LOUVRE Solution: 10 letters

S	L	E	S	S	A	B	I	N	E	S	Z	O	N	E
T	A	S	U	A	N	A	C	E	D	S	E	C	O	N
U	S	L	C	P	R	I	N	T	S	D	N	K	L	S
D	L	I	V	U	F	E	E	S	E	T	I	O	E	N
Y	E	B	T	A	L	X	C	L	L	N	T	O	G	O
O	W	E	F	L	T	P	H	E	G	O	R	B	N	I
S	E	R	I	I	S	O	T	S	E	R	A	F	A	S
M	J	T	L	Y	R	R	R	U	D	F	M	E	L	S
O	L	E	C	L	I	A	T	E	R	E	C	I	E	E
O	S	H	O	C	F	A	N	A	M	E	U	L	H	S
R	E	G	H	T	T	O	N	U	E	U	L	E	C	G
D	E	E	C	S	N	C	R	A	Y	O	N	R	I	N
E	U	A	P	P	E	A	R	S	E	T	A	D	M	I
R	R	I	V	O	L	I	S	T	E	P	E	I	I	W
O	T	I	C	K	E	T	S	T	C	E	J	B	O	N

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Appears, Book, Crayon, De L'Horloge, Denon, Eye, Fees, France, Front, Jean-Luc Martinez, Jewels, Kings, Les Sabines, Le Tricheur, Liberté, Lift, Michelangelo, Mural, Noces de Cana, Objects, Prints, Psyché, Raft, Red Rooms, Relief, Rivoli, Salvatore Mundi, Sculpture, Sessions, Statue, Step, Study, Sully, Textiles, Tickets, Wings, Zone

Yesterday's Answer: Assembly

The NEW **Treasury 48** can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

Sale works 5 scoreless in debut, Red Sox lose 3-2 to Rays

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP)—Chris Sale worked five scoreless innings in his season debut, but the Boston bullpen couldn't hold a two-run lead in a 3-2 loss to the Tampa Bay Rays on Tuesday night.

Sale, out all season with a fracture in his right rib cage, allowed three hits with one walk and struck out five. The lefty reached 97 mph on his fastball during a 78-pitch, 53-strike outing.

"I felt better as it went on," Sale said. "Feeling strong in the fourth and fifth inning, that's nice. I'll just keep building off of that."

The Red Sox are hoping the 33-year-old Sale can boost their chances of making the playoffs. This was just his 10th start for Boston since 2019; he missed 2020 and most of 2021 following Tommy John surgery.

"Sale was tough," Rays manager Kevin Cash said. "He looked really sharp for not having pitched all season long in the big leagues."

Corey Kluber (5-5) allowed two runs and four hits in six innings to beat the Red Sox in consecutive starts. The right-hander went six shutout innings in a 7-1 victory at Boston last Wednesday.

The Rays went up 3-2 in the sixth when pinch-hitter Francisco Mejía had an RBI single off Matt Strahm (3-3). Two more runs scored when the Red Sox made two errors on the same play.

Brooks Raley worked the ninth for his fifth save in six chances.

Boston second baseman Trevor Story left the game when he was hit on the right hand by a pitch he swung at in the fifth inning. He was scheduled to undergo X-rays late Tuesday night.

Tampa Bay trailed 2-1 with two out in the sixth when Taylor Walls lined a single off Strahm's left wrist. The left-hander then threw wildly to first base, allowing Isaac Paredes to score. First baseman Franchy Cordero then threw off the mark to the plate, and Mejía scored the go-ahead run.

AP

Boston Red Sox starting pitcher Chris Sale throws to a Tampa Bay Rays batter during the second inning of a baseball game Tuesday July 12, 2022, in St. Petersburg, Fla.

Orioles 4, Cubs 2

In Chicago, Ramón Urías hit a two-run homer and made a big defensive play, and Baltimore beat Chicago for its ninth straight win.

Jorge Mateo also homered as Baltimore (44-44) reached .500 for the first time this season. It's the longest win streak for the Orioles since the franchise won 13 straight in September 1999.

Baltimore right-hander Jordan Lyles (6-7) pitched seven innings of two-run ball in his second straight win. Jorge López, the Orioles' lone All-Star selection, worked the ninth for his 17th save in 21 chances.

All-Star Ian Happ homered for Chicago, which dropped its fifth in a row. Adrian Sampson (0-1) allowed three runs and six hits in 5 1/3 innings.

Braves 4, Mets 1

In Atlanta, Matt Olson hit a go-ahead, two-run homer in the sixth inning, Adam Duvall went deep for two runs in the seventh and Atlanta trimmed New York's NL East lead to 1 1/2 games.

The Braves dropped the series opener to the Mets but haven't lost consecutive games since June 17-18. They are 30-9 since June 1, best in the major leagues over that span.

Atlanta had one hit against Mets starter David Peterson (5-2) before Olson crushed a slider 426 feet to center field, his 14th homer of the season.

Tyler Matzek (1-2) faced the minimum in 1 1/3 innings. A.J. Minter earned his fourth save with a perfect ninth.

Reds 4, Yankees 3

In New York, Jonathan India drove in two runs with a go-ahead, bases-loaded single with two outs in the ninth inning, and Cincinnati rallied past New York.

The Yankees were 49-0 when leading after eight innings and the Reds were 0-48 when trailing after eight before New York closer Clay Holmes (4-1) entered with a 3-0 lead but failed to retire any of the five hitters he faced. The Yankees have lost three straight for the second time this year.

Reiver Sanmartin (2-4) pitched a scoreless eighth. Alexis Diaz struck out Aaron Judge and got a double play from Gleyber Torres to finish his third career save.

Before pulling off their fifth straight win, the Reds did little against Gerrit Cole, who allowed four hits and struck out 11 in seven innings.

Astros 6, Angels 5

In Anaheim, Calif., Kyle Tucker delivered a tiebreaking RBI double in the ninth inning, and Houston blew a four-run lead before rallying for a victory over spiraling Los Angeles.

José Altuve led off the ninth with a walk from Angels closer Raisel Iglesias (2-6), who had his second straight calamitous outing. Aledmys Díaz singled before a double to right by Tucker, a first-time All-Star selection last week.

Díaz hit an early two-run homer and Alex Bregman and Altuve had RBI singles before the Astros wasted a strong six-inning start by Luis Garcia with a mistake-filled seventh. The AL West leaders have still won four of five and 21 of 27 to move a season-high 28 games above .500 at 57-29.

Hector Neris (2-3) pitched the eighth, and Ryan Pressly picked up his 19th save.

Cardinals 7, Dodgers 6

In St. Louis, Albert Pujols and rookie Nolan Gorman homered as St. Louis ended Los Angeles' seven-game winning streak.

Andrew Knizner drove in three runs on three singles as St. Louis won its third straight.

Trea Turner had a two-run homer and single, and scored three runs for the Dodgers. Freddie Freeman added a solo homer, two singles and an RBI double.

Juan Oviedo (2-1) worked 1 1/3 innings in relief. Giovanny Gallegos gave up a leadoff homer to Freeman, but hung on in the ninth inning for his 10th save.

Mitch White (1-2) allowed six runs on 10 hits in five innings.

Athletics 14, Rangers 7, 12 innings

In Arlington, Texas, Chad Pinder hit a grand slam during an eight-run 12th inning and Oakland beat Texas.

Corey Seager homered for a career-high fifth straight game to get the Rangers within 4-3 in the ninth, and Kole Calhoun tied it with a single a few batters later.

Pinder was Texas' automatic runner to open the 12th and scored on Vimael Machin's sacrifice fly off Dennis Santana (3-4). Three more runs scored before Pinder came to bat with the bases loaded, and he hit the first pitch from Kolby Allard into the left-field seats to make it 14-6.

Kirby Snead (1-0) struck out two and stranded two after entering with one out in the 11th.

Giants 13, Diamondbacks 0

In San Francisco, Thairo Estrada hit two homers, Logan Webb struck out eight in six scoreless innings and San Francisco routed Arizona.

Joey Bart and Yermín Mercedes also connected off Dallas Keuchel (2-7).

Webb (8-4) pitched around traffic in nearly every inning and had two walks in beating Arizona for the third time in four starts. Webb allowed five hits and ended his night on a comebacker by Carson Kelly to end the sixth with two on.

Blue Jays 4, Phillies 3

In Philadelphia, José Berríos matched his career high by striking out 13 over six innings, Lourdes Gurriel Jr. had four hits and Toronto snapped a four-game losing streak.

Berríos (7-4) allowed three runs and six hits, improving to 5-0 in eight home starts. Jordan Romano finished for his 19th save in 22 chances.

Gurriel singled in the second, doubled and scored in the third, doubled home the go-ahead run in the sixth and singled in the eighth.

Jeurys Familia (1-1) allowed one run and four hits in 1 1/3 innings as Philadelphia lost its third straight.

Tigers 7, Royals 5

In Kansas City, Mo., Miguel Cabrera drove in the tying and go-ahead runs, matching Ted Williams for 14th place on the career RBI list, and Detroit rallied past Kansas City to snap a four-game skid.

Cabrera's sacrifice fly in the fifth inning made it 3-3, and he had an RBI grounder for the Tigers' first run in a four-run seventh. He equaled Williams with 1,838 RBIs.

The Royals committed three errors in the seventh behind Jose Cuas (2-1), who allowed four runs, only one of them earned. Kansas City had four errors overall — two by shortstop Bobby Witt Jr. — as its three-game winning streak ended.

Beau Brieske (3-6) pitched six innings, allowing three runs on five hits and striking out four. Gregory Soto worked the ninth for his 18th save.

Brewers 6, Twins 3

In Minneapolis, Andrew McCutchen and Willy Adames each hit a two-run homer, and Milwaukee outlasted three rain delays to beat Minnesota.

Jandel Gustave (2-0) worked a hitless fifth. Devin Williams pitched a perfect eighth inning to set up Josh Hader for his 27th save in a perfect ninth.

Jorge Polanco homered and Nick Gordon and Byron Buxton drove in runs for the Twins. Josh Winder (4-3) gave up five runs and four hits in five innings.

Rockies 5, Padres 3

In Denver, Charlie Blackmon hit a tiebreaking three-run homer, Austin Gomber pitched six strong innings and Colorado beat San Diego.

Gomber (5-7) permitted one run and six hits. Daniel Bard pitched a 1-2-3 ninth for his 19th save in 21 chances.

Mike Clevinger (2-2) gave up Blackmon's home run on his fourth pitch of the sixth inning. He allowed four of the five batters he faced in the inning to reach before being pulled.

Guardians 4, White Sox 1, game 1

In Cleveland, Shane Bieber pitched a three-hitter for his first complete game this year and José Ramírez and Amed Rosario drove in two runs apiece, sending Cleveland past Chicago in a doubleheader opener.

Bieber (4-5) struck out seven and walked none. He had been 0-2 in six starts since winning at Baltimore on June 3, the longest winless streak of his big league career.

Rosario had a pair of RBI doubles off Davis Martin (1-3), driving in Austin Hedges in the third and Myles Straw in the fifth.

White Sox 7, Guardians 0, game 2

In Cleveland, Dylan Cease struck out nine in 5 2/3 innings, and Chicago split a doubleheader with Cleveland.

José Abreu, Luis Robert and Josh Harrison homered for Chicago, which had dropped four of six.

Cease (8-4) allowed five hits and walked three. The right-hander has not allowed more than one earned run in nine consecutive starts, posting a 0.53 ERA over his last 51 innings.

Abreu hit a two-run homer in the first against Konnor Pilkington (1-2), who ultimately allowed four runs — three earned — in five innings.

Pirates 3, Marlins 2

In Miami, rookie Oneil Cruz hit a tiebreaking RBI triple and Jake Marisnick homered for the second straight game as Pittsburgh beat Miami.

Diego Castillo had two hits for the Pirates in their fourth straight victory. Dillon Peters (5-2) worked 2 2/3 innings of one-run relief. David Bednar pitched the ninth for his 16th save.

Cruz made it 2-1 when he tripled home Castillo in the fifth. Cruz then scored on Jason Delay's single against Daniel Castano (1-3).

NBA stiffens take-foul penalty, will keep play-in tournament

LAS VEGAS (AP)— The NBA has completed the process of changing the transition take foul rule, ending years of discussion about what to do with the long-maligned tactic.

And, also as expected, the play-in tournament is going to be around for the foreseeable future.

The league's board of governors finalized those two matters Tuesday, approving a plan to award one free throw when teams are disadvantaged by the take foul — as well as removing the "experimental" designation from the play-in element to the postseason.

"Generally, it was upbeat coming out of our meeting," NBA Commissioner Adam Silver said. "People are thrilled that as we head into next season, it looks like we'll be on our normal track in terms of when the season starts, in terms of our protocols around the game, particularly around the health and safety of our players."

It wasn't a surprise that the league changed the penalty on take fouls; Silver told The Associated Press in early June that it would change, though cautioned that the new rule might still be tweaked in future years.

The take foul — in which the defender does not make a play on the ball — is what the league classifies as one that occurs either "during a transition scoring opportunity or immediately following a change of possession and before the offensive team had the opportunity to advance the ball." The exception is in the final 2 minutes of the fourth quarter or overtime.

The new penalty for such a foul is one free throw, which may be attempted by any player on the offended team in the game at the time the foul was committed, and continued possession.

Silver addressed a number of other topics, including:

REVENUE

The NBA is coming off a massive financial year, with revenue topping $10 billion for the first time and basketball-related income reaching $8.9 billion, another record.

Silver said the numbers are particularly strong considering the league is still dealing with a pandemic, and it wasn't that long ago when some questioned whether sports could survive the virus — at least in the sense of whether people would want to gather again.

"The numbers did surprise me to a certain degree because it exceeded projections, and the projections represent where we think our business is going," Silver said. "I think it's quite remarkable from where we came 2 1/2 years ago."

KEVIN DURANT

Kevin Durant is under contract for four more years with the Brooklyn Nets, and his trade request has been one of the biggest stories of the offseason.

It hasn't been one that Silver has particularly enjoyed.

"This needs to be a two-way street," Silver said. "Teams provide enormous security and guarantees to players, and the expectation in return is that they'll meet their end of the bargain. There's always conversations that go on behind closed doors between players and representatives and teams, but we don't like to see players requesting trades and we don't like to see it playing out the way it is."

PLAY-IN TOURNAMENT

The play-in tournament has generally been considered a success, so it was no surprise that the league is keeping it around.

The play-in tournament — in its current form — has been used in each of the last two seasons, where the teams that finish seventh, eighth, ninth and 10th in the East and West meet to determine the final two playoff spots in each conference.

The No. 7 team plays the No. 8 team, with the winner clinching the No. 7 seed in the playoffs. The No. 9 team plays the No. 10 team, with the loser eliminated and the winner moving on to face the team that lost the 7-8 game. The winner of that matchup is the No. 8 seed.

It's been a hit, primarily because it tends to give a March Madness feel — four elimination games before the playoffs even begin — and gives more teams incentive to not tank for better odds in the draft lottery.

There was a play-in element in 2020 as well in the restart bubble at Walt Disney World, when Portland beat Memphis for the No. 8 seed in the Western Conference. Memphis could have gotten the No. 8 seed that year by beating Portland twice; the Blazers had to win only one game to claim the spot.

LOAD MANAGEMENT

Load management—the fancy term given now when a player gets to sit out a game to rest — has been a challenge for the league and its teams in recent years. Silver said it will continue to be discussed with the players' association as the sides get more into negotiations for the next collective bargaining agreement.

AP

Adam Silver, NBA commissioner, attends a game during the first half an NBA summer league basketball game between the Los Angeles Clippers and the Los Angeles Lakers, Tuesday, July 12, 2022, in Las Vegas.

The league has taken steps, driven by sleep science and other data, to try and make the schedule more player-friendly in recent years. The stretches of four games in five nights have been eliminated, instances of back-to-back games have dropped, and the league has even tinkered with keeping teams in the same road city for consecutive games in an effort to limit travel over the course of a season.

That said, sometimes, a player still sits. Silver suggested it might be time to consider adding money as an incentive for playing more often.

"I'm all in favor of guaranteed contracts," Silver said. "But maybe that on top of your typical guaranteed contracts, some incremental money should be based on number of games played and results of those games. I mean, it's that's how most industries work, where there's financial incentives — even among highly paid executives for performance."

ABA PAYMENTS

The NBA and the NBPA announced a new program — jointly funded — to provide payments to approximately 115 ABA players who played at least three seasons but didn't qualify for NBA pensions. They'll get "recognition payments" of $3,828 per year of service.

"Our players have a genuine sense of appreciation for those who paved the way and helped us achieve the success we enjoy today," NBPA Executive Director Tamika Tremaglio said. "We have always considered the ABA players a part of our brotherhood and we are proud to finally recognize them with this benefit."

Silver said the league and the players "felt a need to act on behalf of these former ABA players who are aging and, in many cases, facing difficult economic circumstances."

Former Beavers Payton, Eubanks reunited with Trail Blazers

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP)— A little more than six years ago, guard Gary Payton II and forward Drew Eubanks were teammates at Oregon State, leading the Beavers to an NCAA Tournament appearance after a 26-year drought.

Now they're teammates once more — and back in Oregon — with the Portland Trail Blazers.

"It's really cool, especially coming back to Portland, being in Oregon and everything. I saw him yesterday and it was like we never even left," Eubanks said. "We did something special in Corvallis, we went back to the tournament for the first time in a long time, and trying to do something special here too."

Payton, son of former Oregon State and Seattle SuperSonics star Gary Payton, won an NBA title with the Warriors last month before signing a three-year, $28 million deal with the Blazers as a free agent.

He emerged last season as a defensive stopper for Golden State, returning from a broken elbow to contribute in the NBA Finals against Boston. He averaged 7.1 points and 3.5 rebounds over a career-high 71 games, his first season playing regularly.

"That was just an incredible run, just from the beginning of the season, finding my way on that team everything that came out of that. It's been a great, great learning experience," Payton said. "Just to bring everything I've learned over there and try to apply it here and build this team chemistry, I think that's gonna be probably one of the biggest pieces."

Eubanks signed four 10-day contracts with the Blazers last season, stepping into a key role when big man Jusuf Nurkic was injured. Eventually, Portland signed him for the rest of the season and awarded him with a one-year contract going into this season.

"I thought Drew came here and earned it," Blazers coach Chauncey Billups said Thursday.

When the Beavers went to the NCAA Tournament to cap the 2015-16 season, Eubanks was a freshman from Troutdale, Oregon. He later signed with San Antonio in 2018 as an undrafted free agent and spent time with both the Spurs and their G-League affiliate in Austin.

Payton played two seasons for the Beavers. After going undrafted, he had stints with the Milwaukee Bucks and the Los Angeles Lakers and Washington Wizards, while also spending time in the G-League. He was even on Portland's training camp roster in 2018, but eventually waived. He landed with the Warriors in 2021.

Billups praised Payton as the kind of player he can put anywhere.

"He's just my kind of guy," Billups said. "He's just a Swiss Army knife, proved his value and his worth all year long. He's done something that a lot of people never do in this league — and I'm not just talking about winning a championship. He grinded all the way up, a guy that was on the minimum for a long time and fighting for himself, fighting to get into the league, he's proven to be a very, very valuable asset."

HANMI Charity Golf to benefit NMTech

Organizers have named Northern Marianas Technical Institute as the beneficiary of the 20th Annual HANMI Charity Classic Golf Tournament on Sept. 17, at LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort west course.

"The Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands *(HANMI)* is pleased to announce Northern Marianas Technical Institute as the beneficiary of this year's HANMI Charity Classic Golf Tournament," said HANMI chair Ivan Quichocho. "NMTech is a vital partner of HANMI and our members in training and certifying individuals to develop careers in the hospitality industry, including certification under the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute of culinary arts."

The tournament is open to the first 144 paid registrants. Registration forms will be available shortly at www.saipanhotels.org or www.facebook.com/HANMI670.

"On behalf of the Board of Trustees, faculty, staff and students of the Northern Marianas Technical Institute, we are honored and grateful to the HANMI team for naming NMTech as its beneficiary of this year's Charity Classic Golf Tournament," said NMTech CEO Jodina Attao. "NMTech's vision is to enrich our workforce with technical skills and core fundamentals for tomorrow's world - in the past year, we have been blessed with an abundance of support from our community, partnering agencies, private industries and so many other groups that bring this vision to life in so many ways."

The early bird tournament fee is $120 and includes green fee and the awards luncheon. The fee increases to $140 after the early bird deadline of Friday, Sept. 3, at 5pm. For an additional $30 players may also compete for optional play prizes, including longest drive (male and female), accurate drive, aggressive drive, and four chances for nearest to the pin. Showtime is 6am and the tournament will start at 7am. The awards banquet will immediately follow the tournament at LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort.

For more information, contact tournament chair Juko Ishikawa at worldresort@pticom.com or visit www.facebook.com/HANMI670.

The 20th Annual HANMI Charity Classic Golf Tournament will be held on Sept. 17, 2022, at LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort west course and will benefit Northern Marianas Technical Institute. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The picturesque LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort west course will host the 20th Annual HANMI Charity Classic Golf Tournament on Sept. 17.

Varias victorious in Fil-Taga tilt

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Ed Varias was victorious in Fil-Taga Golfers Association's May Ace of the Month Tournament held last May 28 at the Coral Ocean Resort golf course.

Varias beat a 15-golfer field after shooting a net 67 built around an 89 gross for the 22-handicapper.

Varias

Emil Padernal, Mike Cruz, and Jhun Cayetano finished tied with identical net scores of 70, but the former took the runner-up plum thanks to his score of net 34 in the back nine.

Cruz completed the Top 3 with his calculated 34.5 net in the last nine holes, while Cayetano was caught on the outside looking in with his net 35.

The other Fil-Taga members that took part in the May tournament, with their scores in parenthesis, are as follows: Ruben Avendano (net 74), Joseph Fernandez (net 76), Romy Cayetano (net 76), Wil Maui (net 76), Hak Chon Bae (net 77), Albert Pajarillaga (net 77), Lito Mendoza (net 80), Jess Yumul (net 80), Dan Ganacias (net 80), Tom Palikkun (gross 92), and Das Krishnan (gross 92).

In the par 3 competition, Palikkun took the cake in hole No. 3, while Maui was without peer in hole No. 12. There was no winner in hole No. 14.

NMBA

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kyo 2020 Paralympic Games as a BWF Line Judge, was the line judge manager and trainer at the Mini Games, while Susan Taylor served as umpire manager/trainer. Completing the Badminton Oceania technical officials group are referee Peter Crocker and umpires Vic Kim, Holly Cho, Richard Wong, Taurea Mara, and Heirani Taupo.

With the success of the Mini Games and training of more local technical officials, discussions on a possible hosting of high-level tournaments in the NMI have been initiated.

"It is incredibly motivating and positive to see such a huge amount of interest from the local workforce. We are very grateful for the passion and dedication from the local volunteers who were pivotal to the tournament's success. Moreover, I'd like to thank the experienced technical officials who accompanied us to the Pacific Mini Games for sharing their knowledge and helping others to realize their potential by officiating in badminton," Carrel said. ***(PR)***

ROTA

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who worked long hours under the rain and sun to prepare the race courses throughout the event; or like many of our residents who volunteered their time to cheer on the athletes as they competed on our island. These are the unsung heroes who made an event on Rota a historic success," he said.

The Rota mayor also extended his heartfelt gratitude to Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Mini Games Organizing Committee chair Marco Peter and CEO Vicente "Ben" Babauta, and Northern Marianas Sports Association president Jerry Tan for organizing and coordinating the 11th staging of the Games.

"It's an event that we all will remember long after it has closed. As Pacific Games Council president Vidhaya Lakhan said the CNMI has raised the bar in hosting the Pacific Mini Games."

For his part, Triathlon Association of the CNMI secretary general Ricky Castro thanked Atalig for playing such gracious hosts for the triathlon community not only of Saipan but of the entire Oceania region.

He also sent kudos to Atalig's staff and other officials on Rota for their help in staging the three triathlon events in a span of three days from June 20 to 22 on Rota. They include Rota Mayor's Office special assistant Ignacio "Ike" Mendiola and executive assistant Aubry Hocog, Marianas Visitors Authority trades technician David Atalig, Rota Municipal Council chair Jonovan Lizama, Department of Fire and Emergency Management Services resident deputy commissioner Steve Mesngon, Department of Public Safety-Rota resident director Glenn Maratita, Rota Health Center resident director Vanessa Quitugua, Rota High School principal Tanya King, Commonwealth Ports Authority-Rota manager Sharlene Manglona, Historic Preservation Office's Eloy Inos, Antonelli Rosario, and Trinity Sablan, and numerous volunteers who have made a significant role for, during, and after the event.

Castro also thanked MGOC's Peter, Babauta, and sports director Ramon Tebuteb for their help in staging the Games not only on Rota but on Saipan and Tinian as well. He also thanked Environmental Surveillance Laboratory manager Charito Bautista.

The CNMI won the bronze in aquathlon during the triathlon event of the Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games 2022 on Rota. The winning team was made up of Isaiah Aleksenko, Leo Wania, Kathy Ruszala, and Heather Brook.

Also making up the CNMI National Triathlon Team for the Games were Robyn Spaeth, Christian Villacrusis, and alternate Dylan Mister. Jay Diyco served as manager with Mick Ferris as coach.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The CNMI's Isaiah Aleksenko, Leo Wania, Kathy Ruszala, and Heather Brook won the bronze in the aquathlon event of the Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games 2022 on Rota. They are seen here at the podium with the gold- and silver-medal winning teams of New Caledonia and Tahiti, respectively.

RUN

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together to donate these. Running shoes are not cheap. We even had some $200 shoes donated in the lot. Thank you so much to the running community for your beautiful heart," said Run Saipan president Edward Dela Cruz Jr.

Just some of the high-performance running shoes donated were pairs of Hoka One, Saucony, and New Balance shoes.

NMC president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero also thanked Saipan's running community for coming to the aid of their brothers to the south.

"All around the CNMI, we are seeing more of an effort to live healthy lives, whether it be the growth of Saipan runs, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' Fit to Lead initiative, this past weekend's Kulot Acha'Ikak 5K run, or NMC's Health Squad. That is why we appreciate partnerships and support that helped our community on Rota with their recent Couch to 5K Run event held last Sunday, July 10. The event helped dozens of people from Rota over the past two months to train up toward running a full 5K. That was made possible, in part, by this generous donation," he said.

CNMI national coach Dr. Snyder also thanked community members who donated their pre-loved shoes to the shoe drive.

"As Run Saipan grows in both membership and outreach, we are very happy to be able to form partnerships in the community. Thank you to all of our members who donated high quality shoes and thank you to NMC for putting this together."

Staffler kudos

Rep. Leila Staffler (D-Saipan), meanwhile, thanked everyone who made the first-ever Acha'ikak Kulot 5K last Saturday at LauLau Bay a success.

"I am so proud of how the event turned out. There was months of planning that went into it and lots of collaboration among different government agencies and partners. All of the time spent in preparation was well worth it because the event went very, very smoothly."

The lawmaker said she was especially impressed with the shuttle service that ferried runners from San Vicente Elementary School to the drop-off point for the run at the bottom of the San Vicente Laulau Bay entrance.

"That was something that had not yet been done by the Run Saipan group, but they had been interested in seeing how it works because they have future runs where they will provide shuttle services for the runners. So our event was a great trial run for them to experience. As for next year, I definitely hope to host this event again, and will always encourage more participation from the community to join in," she added.

Staffler went on to enumerate the various agencies and companies that helped make the Acha'ikak Kulot 5K a success. They are the following: Marianas Visitors Authority, Saipan Mayor's Office, Department of Public Works, Run Saipan, Northern Marianas Athletics, Department of Public Safety, Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, NMTech, San Vicente Elementary School, Marianas High School JROTC, Kagman High School JRTOC, NMC Health Squad, Saipan International School, Rep. Richard Lizama and his staff, Rep. Leila Staffler's staff, MidPac Micronesia, and Marianas Pacific Distributors, Inc.

Sale works 5 scoreless in debut, Red Sox lose 3-2 to Rays

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Rota mayor: Triathlon event historic

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
From left, Triathlon Association of the CNMI president Manolo Sitchon, World Triathlon referee Peter Aldridge, technical director Stephen Damien, Rota Mayor Efraim Atalig, Pacific Games Council president Vidya Lakhan, Rota Mayor's Office executive assistant Aubry Hocog, Rota Mayor's Office special assistant Ignacio "Ike" Mendiola, and TRAC secretary general Ricky Castro.

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

No less than Rota Mayor Efraim Atalig acknowledged the significance of the southernmost island of the CNMI in hosting the triathlon competition of the recently concluded Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games 2022.

"As the 2022 Pacific Mini Games hosted by the Northern Marianas Islands comes to a close, I look back at this moment and see how far we have come as a community and our roles in this historic event as Pacific islanders. This year's PMG on Rota impressed many visiting officials with our legendary hospitality, warm friendship, and peaceful atmosphere," he said.

Atalig added that the success of the triathlon competition was only made possible because of the dedication and cooperation of the people of Rota.

"Our people from all walks of life, be it the government or private sector employees

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Run Saipan shoe drive nets 32 pairs

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Run Saipan's mission to deliver soles to the feet of Rota runners was accomplished after Saipan's running community donated 32 pairs of shoes for the recent Northern Marianas College Couch to 5K Run.

"I didn't expect us to have this many shoes donated, especially with how hard our current state is in the CNMI with rising gas prices and [Commonwealth Utilities Corp.] surcharge rates. It's really great to see the running community come

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
From left, CNMI national coach Dr. Snyder, Northern Marianas College President Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero, and Run Saipan president Edward Dela Cruz Jr. pose with the shoes donated to the club's shoe drive.

NMBA gains accredited umpires, line judges

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Pacific-accredited line judges join BWF line judge Ravi Nandan, second left and Badminton Oceania referee Peter Crocker, right, for a group photo during the certificate awarding ceremony in the final day of the badminton competition in the 2022 Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games last month at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games 2022 served as a perfect opportunity for the Northern Marianas Badminton Association to boost its local technical official capacity as more than 40 individuals gained accreditation during the regional event.

NMBA secretary general Christy Villaflor, Ericka Santiago, and Arianne Antonio received their Pacific Accredited Umpire qualifications at the badminton competition in the Mini Games, while 44 individuals passed their line judge assessment and gained their Pacific Accredited Line Judge qualifications. Villaflor, Santiago, and Antonio umpired matches in the badminton competition that ran from June 20 to 25, while the 44 individuals volunteered as line judges in the same tournament.

"We would like to congratulate everyone who received their Pacific Accredited Umpire and Line Judges qualifications. Thank you all for your time and efforts, as your assistance allowed us to successfully host the badminton competition in the Mini Games," NMBA president Merlie Tolentino said.

Tolentino added that technical officials play a critical role in the continued growth of the sport in the NMI. Having accredited and qualified officials will help the NMBA run more tournaments, especially at the grassroots and interscholastic levels.

The NMBA president thanked Badminton Oceania and its technical officials led by Badminton Oceania CEO/secretary general Julie Carrel for assisting in the upskilling and assessments of local volunteers and officials. Ravi Nandan, who attended the To-

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